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ABSTRACT

Drawing from a study of the progress of minority students to the baccalaureate degree, this report raises questions on how institutions and states can intervene to speed the process of reducing inequities that are clearly the product of past differences in minority access to education and jobs, and identifies practices of particular promise. Chapter 1 presents the issues, framework, and methods of the study; identifies the participating institutions; and gives an overview of the report. Chapter 2 provides contextual information about the environments for postsecondary education in each of the states represented in the study, while chapter 3 introduces the concept of conflicting cultures as an approach to understanding the barriers urban students experience in their pursuit of a degree. In chapter 4, students attending urban colleges are introduced through their own words, and through comments of those who work closely with them. Chapters 5 and 6 examine urban community college and university programs and services in terms of their impact on students interested in completing a four-year degree. The transfer process and some successful efforts aimed at articulation are the focus of chapter 7. Chapter 8 offers student perceptions of the transfer process. Finally chapter 9 discusses the implications of the study in the form of a series of recommendations. (EJV)

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March 1986

Richard C. Richardson, Jr.
Arizona State University

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HELPING MINORITIES ACHIEVE DEGREES: THE URBAN CONNECTION

A Report to the Ford Foundation

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Arizona State University

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March 1986

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Preface

In January, 1984, the Ford Foundation provided companion grants to Arizona State University and Florida State University to study the progress of minority students to the baccalaureate degree in urban settings. The concern that prompted the study grew out of observations about differential achievement among racial groups. In a society that is both free and integrated, where economic and social mobility is closely linked to educational status, equal opportunity is inextricably linked to access to the baccalaureate degree.

No one believes that more than two centuries of segregation and discrimination will be erased in one generation by improved access to postsecondary education. Past practices and their present correlates in the form of poverty, unemployment, housing patterns and differential access to public school education should not however become a justification for neglect of those variables institutions can influence and which in aggregate might reduce much of the current gap between minority and non-minority achievement.

This study raises the question of how institutions and states can intervene now to speed the process of reducing inequities that are clearly the product of past differences in access to education and jobs. The report does not exhort institutions to do what many have already begun. Instead it identifies practices of particular promise implemented by institutions or states concerned with the issues the study raises.

The problem is not so much one of finding new innovations that have not already been considered. Instead the need seems to be to employ those interventions whose effectiveness has already been demonstrated in systematic rather than piecemeal fashion. There is also the need to assure institutions that are "sampling the water" without any conviction that their interventions will make any difference, that they can improve degree opportunities for minority students through approaches that have already been tested, if they are willing to make the necessary commitment.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The list of those who contributed to this study is long indeed. The Ford Foundation provided funding and the visibility that results from recognition by an organization long respected for its concern with the issues the study considered. Our Program Officer, Alison Bernstein, provided significant guidance at key points as well as flexibility when that virtue was needed. The Office of Educational Research and Improvement of the U.S. Department of Education provided a grant to Arizona State University as part of a consortium of universities selected as the National Center for Postsecondary Governance and Finance which permitted continuation of the Ford study and funded latter stages of the report preparation.

The chief executive officers of participating institutions and their coordinating board colleagues committed themselves to the study of issues that have been for many sensitive and politically risky. The representatives they chose became research colleagues and key informants as the study progressed. For their significant contributions we recognize each here,

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CHAPTER 1

MINORITY DEGREE ACHIEVEMENT IN CONTEXT

A unique characteristic of American higher education is the emphasis placed on freedom of movement between institutions having significantly different missions, program emphases, and expectations for student performance. Implicit within this arrangement has been the assumption that students who begin in an open access institution will, if successful, be able to move to institutions providing different and more advanced opportunities. Over the years there have been many studies of the success of efforts to improve articulation between institutions with varying missions. In general, such studies have indicated an acceptable level of movement.

At the same time, general studies of the effectiveness of the transfer function have given inadequate attention to urban areas. And those who pose the greatest challenge to efforts aimed at equality of opportunity are disproportionately concentrated in cities. Simply stated, more poor people, more immigrants, and more minorities live in urban settings where those among the college age population are still less than half as likely to enroll in college as their suburban counterparts. The problem is particularly urgent in inner cities (College Entrance Examination Board, 1981).

The educational opportunities in urban areas frequently are not equal to those in suburban and urban areas, at least in terms of institutions that are accessible to the poor. A recent study of the Chicago area (Orfield et al, 1984) points out that city and suburban high schools are different worlds educationally with wide gaps existing even within the city. The areas populated by the more affluent experience lower drop-out rates and smaller class sizes. As well, they have more teachers and more specialists in key pre-collegiate subjects. In the minority areas of the cities, schools lack even the basic essentials for college preparation. Those few students who do complete high school operate far below twelfth grade achievement.

The differences between pre-collegiate opportunity lead to differential access to opportunities at the baccalaureate level and beyond. The need to improve access for minorities is thus, one of the major unfinished pieces of business that lies before all of American higher education (Heller, 1984).

Blacks, Hispanics, and Native Americans continue to be underrepresented in four-year institutions. Among blacks, there have been proportional enrollment declines since 1976. Of even greater concern has been the significant loss in share of degrees received. In brief, minorities are more likely to leave secondary school before graduation. Those who do enter postsecondary education are less likely to complete a degree, and of those who do attend college, approximately one-half will attend two-year rather than four-year schools despite roughly equivalent degree expectations (Wilson and Melandez, 1984).

Minorities have increased their access but the access has been to two-year institutions and, preponderantly, two-year institutions located in urban areas. Astin (1982) is among those who have been most critical of the disproportionate concentration of minority students in institutions with the

fewest resources. Noting that hierarchical systems existing in many states are supported by a policy of selective admissions that forces minority students into community colleges, he concludes that educational opportunity provided to the typical minority student is not the equivalent of that provided to the typical non-minority student. Olivas (1979) expresses similar concern. Among blacks, 37 percent of all full-time students are enrolled in two-year colleges. For Hispanics and American Indians, the comparable figures are 45 percent and 48 percent. In contrast, only 27 percent of full-time non-minority students are enrolled in two-year institutions.

To a considerable degree, then, the problem of minority access to the baccalaureate degree is a problem of access to four-year institutions. Under current circumstances, such access for almost half of all minority students enrolled in postsecondary education requires transfer from a two-year to a four-year institution. Among the persistent obstacles transfer students from non-traditional backgrounds must overcome to achieve the bachelor's degree are: adverse demographic and economic trends, lack of dollars to support necessary programs, staff deficiencies in skills or attitudes, community apathy and even hostility, unhealthy competition among institutions for students and resources, outdated institutional missions, public misperception of institutional purpose that leads to a distorted image, poor planning and management at every level, and organizational inflexibilities (American Association of State Colleges and Universities, 1979). Significantly, the majority of these variables are under institutional control and reflect administrative priorities rather than instructional deficiencies.

The concern about the quality of educational opportunity offered to students in urban areas is not new. More than a decade ago, the Carnegie Commission (1972) recommended that the major responsibility for increasing access to higher education be through community colleges with comprehensive colleges taking the lead in expanding access to upper division and graduate work. They also advised four-year colleges and universities to re-examine admission policy and practices to matriculate at least some portion of their entering student population on a flexible basis. Most public universities now have policies for admitting "differentially qualified" students as some part of their total entering classes, generally not to exceed 10 percent. Significantly, the proportion of minority students in most urban research universities hovers around 10 percent, and recently has been declining.

Issues and Framework of the Study

Over the next decade, the characteristics of students attending postsecondary institutions will change significantly. According to some estimates, more than one-third of the undergraduate student population in the 90's will be composed of minorities and recent immigrants and these new student populations will be disproportionately concentrated in cities. Elsewhere we have treated in greater detail the literature surrounding access to the baccalaureate degree for minorities who begin their postsecondary experience in a community college (Richardson and Bender, 1986). Here we note the issues that were drawn from the literature to guide the study described in this report:

1. What is/should be the role of state government and its coordinating/regulatory agencies in promoting achievement of the baccalaureate degree among urban students who begin their postsecondary education in community colleges?

2. What is/should be the role of the urban community college in providing transfer opportunities for students?

3. What is/should be the role of the urban university in transforming opportunities in the community college into baccalaureate achievement?

4. How many of the students currently enrolled in urban community colleges possess objectives and previous academic preparation that suggest transfer to a four-year institution would be a reasonable and productive course of action?

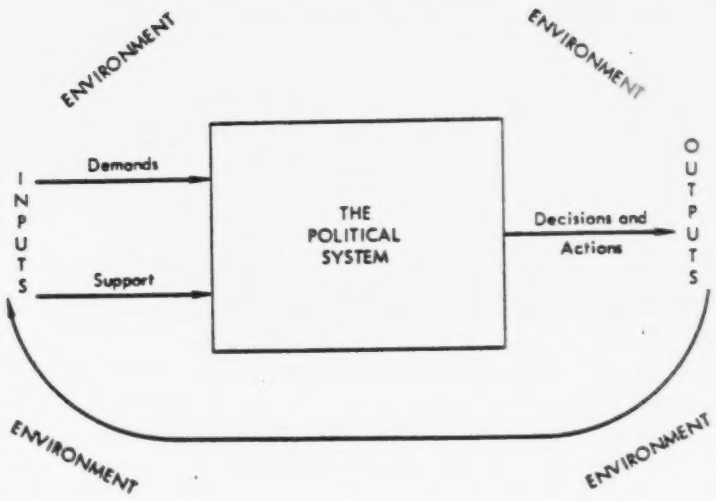
5. Among those who have the requisite objectives and academic preparation, how many actually transfer and at what stage of their academic careers?

6. How do transfers from urban community colleges perform at major receiving institutions?

7. What strengths and weaknesses do students and the faculty who teach them in urban universities attribute to their community college preparation?

8. What changes or enhancements to the policies, programs and services of urban community colleges, urban universities, and state coordinating/regulatory agencies offer the greatest hope for improving baccalaureate achievement for minority and low income students?

The systems model (Easton, 1965) provided a basis for conceptualizing the study of these issues. Easton defined a political system as the interactions through which values are allocated for a society. Political systems function within an environment where they are constantly subject to influences or "inputs", which are expressed as "demands" or "supports". These influences cause disturbances that in turn require decisions and actions from authorities in order to reduce the stress that results. The decisions and actions of authorities are termed "outputs" to distinguish them from "outcomes" which are the consequences of decisions. Or as Easton puts it, "an output is the stone tossed into the pond and its first splash; the outcomes are the ever-widening and vanishing pattern of concentric ripples" (1965, p. 352). Figure 1 presents Easton's familiar simplified mode of a political system.



Important to the rationale for this study is the concept of a feedback loop. In order to maintain a system by reducing stress where required, authorities need two types of information. The first involves a description of the general circumstances of the system and of important conditions influencing its environment. The second is information about outcomes as these flow from any specific decisions or actions that have been taken. While part of the necessary feedback is provided by the regulatory structure, evaluative studies of the type we conducted are also useful in helping authorities decide when intervention may be best calculated in terms of a particular phenomena, as well as the type of intervention that may be necessary to adjust outcomes in the direction suggested by external demands.

This study was designed as a systems analysis of the arrangements in eight states for providing opportunities for urban students including minorities to attain the baccalaureate degree. In keeping with Easton's model, the study produced two types of information for use by authorities in states concerned about these issues: a description of key elements of the postsecondary system for urban students in each of the states, and inductively derived hypotheses expressed in the form of recommendations about the linkages between administrative policies, system characteristics and student outcomes.

The Conduct of the Study

The discrepancies between the proportions of blacks and Hispanics achieving baccalaureate degrees in comparison with caucasians and Asians has become a source of growing concern to educational leaders. Much has been written about possible causes with suspicion centering on federal financial aid policies and the influence of institutional variables on minorities who are far more likely to attend community colleges than their non-minority counterparts. But correlational analysis of large data bases while valuable in furnishing insights about the strength of relationships among contributing variables falls short of describing the variety of state policies and institutional practices that influence degree achievement. And determining that attendance at a community college is related to the likelihood of dropping out before attaining a baccalaureate degree provides little substantive guidance to states that rely on such institutions as a central

part of their postsecondary educational systems. Neither does such information provide much help or comfort for many minority students for whom the community college is now and will remain in the foreseeable future their primary or sole access to higher education.

This study was designed to build on the existing base of knowledge about degree achievement among minority students by looking in depth at policies and practices in major urban areas for each of eight states selected because of their importance to the national scene in the education of blacks and Hispanics and because of the comparability of their approaches to educating students in urban settings. Participating states and institutions are profiled later in this chapter. With the exception of New York and California, excluded because of their size and complexity in relation to study resources, the states and cities are representative of major urban areas where some combination of community colleges and public universities are the major actors in educating minority students. Under the auspices of the National Center for Postsecondary Governance and Finance, California and New York, and six other states are being included in a subsequent phase of the research reported in this volume.

A primary goal of the study reported here was to describe state policies and institutional practices as these appeared to influence student persistence in pursuit of the baccalaureate. Following notification of funding by the Ford Foundation in January 1984, letters were written to the chief executive officers of the community college district serving each of the selected cities. The letter described the purpose of the study, invited participation and requested the appointment of an institutional representative. A similar letter went to the president of the urban university that served as the major recipient of the community college's transfer students. Following agreement to participate by institutions, letters were sent to chief executive officers of the related state coordinating boards informing them of the study and requesting their assistance with data collection at the state level. All who were invited to participate at both institutional and state levels agreed to do so.

As a first step in conducting the study, institutional representatives were convened in March 1984. The purpose of the meeting was to develop the detailed design of the study. Since institutions were designated as the unit of analysis as well as the primary target for the findings, we defined the role of institutional representatives as collaborators rather than subjects. We hoped that if institutions were centrally involved in the design of the study, the collection of data and the interpretation of results; they would be more open to the findings and more likely to implement the recommendations. As well, we wished to benefit from the insights of those who dealt with the study's issues on a day-to-day basis.

Following the design session a detailed conceptual overview and research design document was written and circulated in draft form to institutional representatives. Beyond establishing the conceptual framework and policy issues to be examined the document outlined in detail the methodology and chronology for the study. In essence, the design called for two or three day site visits to each of the participating community colleges and universities and a site visit of similar duration to each state capitol. Site visits by researchers were to be augmented by a survey of a representative sample of

students who had transferred successfully from each participating community college to a participating university. In addition, community college freshmen were asked to write essays describing their background, current status and future aspirations.

Site visits were planned in consultation with institutional representatives who arranged appointments and collected relevant documents. Prior to each visit, site representatives were provided with a brief written statement of the purpose of the study and a copy of the interview guides. These documents were shared with institutional staff along with a reminder of the appointment. Through this approach, staff members had the opportunity to prepare for their interview and bring copies of relevant papers or forms as suggested in the materials they received before the visits.

Institutional representatives also contributed to the design of the survey instrument and approved the final draft. Finally, they reviewed a draft of the project report and met to suggest corrections and to assist in developing the policy recommendations that appear in Chapter 9. Elsewhere we have acknowledged their critical role in the study. Here we simply confirm our indebtedness to their efforts and contributions.

Table 1.1 provides an overview of the data sources, methodology and chronology of the study. The intent of the design was to provide some reasonable balance among the five types of information suggested by Murphy (1980) as critical to the conduct of field research. Through focused interviewing, observation, document analysis and a survey we sought information about:

Context -

> Information about the state, community and organizational settings of the cooperating institutions.

Essential Program Elements -

> Types of programs, support services and administrative arrangements that must be understood to draw inferences about performance of the transfer function.

Program Evolution -

> The dimension of time - over what period and through which changes have current outcomes been influenced?

Strengths and Weaknesses of Current Outcomes -

> What current outcomes are regarded as strengths, which appear to be problematic?

Table 1.1. Description of Data Bases for the Study

Data Bases	Time	Data Sources	Nature of Data	Purpose
Interviews with college and university administrators and faculty	September 1984 - December 1984	Structured interviews conducted on site with representative faculty members and key administrators	Notes from interviews coded by topic and institution	Obtain information on institutional policies and practices, student preparation and achievement, and relationships between paired institutions.
Document Files	September 1984- August 1985	Documents describing policies, practices, student characteristics, outcomes	College and university publications, research reports, position papers, fact books	Corroborate interviews, provide analytical information about student outcomes, describe institutional priorities and practices.
Essays written by community college students in beginning English classes	January 1985 - June 1985	Essays written by community college students according to an assigned format	Content Analysis of student essays coded by race, institution and nature of responses.	Obtain information about student home backgrounds, reasons for attending a community college and future plans

Table 1.1. Description of Data Bases for the Study

Data Bases	Time	Data Sources	Nature of Data	Purpose
Survey Responses	February 1985 - May 1985	Responses of representative samples of students who transferred from participating community colleges to a participating university.	Computer file of individual's responses to a 24 item survey. Printouts of responses by race, institution and academic major.	Identify when transfer decisions were made, resources used in making them, student evaluations of their community college and university experiences and suggestions for improving the transfer process.
Interviews with Coordinating Board Officials	February 1985- June 1985	Structured interviews conducted on site with coordinating board staff, administrators of state financial aid programs and community college coordinating staff	Notes from interviews coded by topic and state	Obtain information about state polices and initiatives related to setting priorities, planning, articulation and state financial aid programs

Areas of Improvement -

Which policy decisions at what levels would emphasize program strengths and reduce weaknesses?

This chapter of the report concludes with a profile of participating cities, their state contexts and the participating institutions. In the remainder of the report we avoid attributing practices to specific institutions or states, a constraint we established during the design session as a necessary stimulus for candor. The only exceptions involve state policies or institutional studies reported elsewhere in the literature and hence not subject to our commitment to confidentiality.

Participating Institutions

The cities of Chicago, Cleveland, Dallas, Miami, Newark, Philadelphia, Phoenix and St. Louis were selected as representative urban settings where states relied upon community colleges for sizeable minority populations. In each of these cities the established inner-city community college campus serving the highest proportion of black and Hispanic students was invited to participate in the study. In Chicago, Dallas, Miami and St. Louis, two community college campuses were selected to provide for balance or contrast among the study institutions. The university receiving the largest number of transfer students from each community college campus was also invited to participate. Below we profile the participating institutions and their urban and state contexts.

Chicago, Illinois

Chicago is the second largest city in the United States with a population of 3 million. According to the 1980 Census, 69 percent of the minority population of Illinois reside in Chicago. The ethnic distribution for the city is 44 percent caucasian, 40 percent black, 14 percent Hispanic, 2 percent Asian and less than one percent Native American.

The Illinois Board of Higher Education serves as the coordinating body for higher education but also has authority to set minimum admission standards for public colleges and universities and to make budget allocation recommendations to the legislature. The Illinois Board of Community Colleges has overall responsibility for the 39 public community college districts but each district has its own local board of trustees. For governance purposes, the 12 public universities are divided into four multi campus systems. A compact, developed between the universities and community colleges, states that transfer students with associate of science or associate of arts degrees will be given junior class standing and have lower-division general education coursework certified.

Chicago State University, located in a residential area of south-side Chicago, was established in 1867. The Fall 1983 enrollment was 7,504 with a

racial/ethnic distribution of 14 percent caucasian, 80 percent black, 3 percent Hispanic and less than one percent, each, Asian and Native American. Forty-nine percent of the students attended part-time, 65 percent were women and the average age was 26 years.

The university offers 56 programs through the colleges of Allied Health, Arts and Sciences, Business Administration, Nursing and Education. Freshman student admission requires a high school diploma or G.E.D. and upper quartile class rank with a 12 ACT composite score, or upper half class rank with a 13 ACT composite score. Transfer students must have a "C" average on all courses taken.

University of Illinois at Chicago was established in 1982 with the merger of the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle and the University of Illinois Medical Center. It is located near the "Chicago Loop." The Fall 1983 student enrollment was 19,821 with 26 percent of the students attending part-time. The average age was 22 years and 44 percent of the students were women. The racial/ethnic distribution was 67 percent caucasian, 12 percent black, 12 percent Asian, 8 percent Hispanic and less than one percent Native American. Fifty-five percent of the students transferred from a two-year institution.

The university has 16 colleges with 7 being graduate or medical colleges. There are 97 undergraduate degree programs offered through the colleges of Architecture, Art and Urban Planning; Associated Health Professions; Business Administrations; Health, Physical Education and Recreation; Liberal Arts and Sciences; Nursing; Social Work; Education and Engineering. Admission requirements for freshman students include a high school diploma or G.E.D. and combination class rank and ACT/SAT test score. Transfer students must have a "C" average on all courses to be admitted.

City Colleges of Chicago was organized in 1966 from preexisting juniorcolleges associated with the public school system. Seventy-five percent of all Illinois community college students are enrolled in the City Colleges of Chicago. The two colleges participating in the study were Kennedy-King College and Wilbur Wright College. **Kennedy-King College** is located in south-central Chicago. It had a Fall 1983 student enrollment of 5,800 with a racial/ethnic distribution of 96 percent black, 2 percent Native American, one percent Hispanic and less than one percent, each, caucasian and Asian. Sixty percent of the students were women, 62 percent attended part-time and the average age was 27 years.

The college offers 23 technical/career programs in which 37 percent of the students were enrolled, and a transfer program enrolling 58 percent; five percent of the students were undecided. Kennedy-King has open-door admissions requring only a high school diploma or G.E.D.

Wilbur Wright College, located in northwest Chicago, had a Fall 1983 student enrollment of 6,343. The racial/ethnic distribution was 63 percent caucasian, 14 percent black, 14 percent Hispanic, 9 percent Asian and less the one percent Native American. The average age was 22 years, 53 percent of the students were women and 75 percent attended part-time.

Wright College awards an associate of arts degree in its transfer programs which enrolled 53 percent of its students. Twenty-eight percent of the

students were enrolled in the 24 associate of applied arts and occupational certificate programs while 19 percent of the students were undecided. The open-door admissions policy of the college requires a high school diploma or G.E.D.

Cleveland, Ohio

Cleveland is the center of the largest metropolitan area in Ohio, Cuyahoga County, and had a population of approximately 57,000 according to the 1980 Census. Cuyahoga County ranks 13th among U.S. counties with approximately 1.5 million people. The county's racial/ethnic distribution is 74 percent caucasian, 23 percent black, 2 percent Hispanic and less than 1 percent, each, Asian and Native American.

The public higher education system in Ohio is comprised of 12 universities, 19 university branch campuses (lower-division) and 31 community and technical colleges. The Ohio Board of Regents serves as the statewide planning and coordinating agency for public policy in higher education. Each community college district and university has its own board of trustees. The role of the two-year college is to provide lower-division general studies, technical education and continuing education while universities offer baccalaureate and graduate degrees and graduate professional education. Articulation agreements between universities and two-year colleges include a course equivalency guide, admission priorities which ensure openings for Ohio associate of arts degree transfer students, and acceptance of transfer students who hold an AA degree with appropriate foundational coursework at the junior class level.

Cleveland State University established in 1965 from preexisting independent colleges, is located in the heart of the city's major commercial center. The Fall 1983 student enrollment was 18,942 with a racial/ethnic distribution of 89 percent caucasian, 9 percent black and 1 percent or less, Hispanic, Native American and Asian. Women represented 44 percent of the student population and part-time students 51 percent.

Majors in sixty fields are offered through the Colleges of Arts and Science, Business Administration, Engineering, Education and Law and Urban Affairs. Admission to the university requires a high school diploma with a prescribed program of study and combination class rank and ACT/SAT test score for freshman students. For transfers, a "C" average on all coursework is required with a maximum of 90-106 quarter units transferable.

Cuyahoga Community College District was formed in 1963 and consists of three colleges: Eastern, Western and Metropolitan. The institution participating in the study was **Metropolitan College** located in downtown Cleveland. It offers associate of arts and associate of science degrees and technical/occupational certificates in forty programs. Sixty percent of the students were enrolled in the technical programs. Admission to the college is essentially open access with a high school diploma or G.E.D. required in some programs.

The Fall 1983 enrollment for Metropolitan College was 8,534 with a racial/ethnic distribution of 36 percent caucasian, 53 percent black, 3 percent Hispanic, 3 percent Asian and less than 1 percent Native American and 5 percent uknown. Part-time students represented 59 percent of the student population and 57 percent were women; the average age was 29 years.

Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas

The Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex encompasses the business and industrial complex of Tarrant and Dallas counties and is one of the fastest growing areas in the nation. The 1980 Census listed the population of the Dallas/Fort Worth metropolitan area as 2.9 million with a racial/ethnic distribution of 74 percent caucasian, 16 percent black, 9 percent Hispanic, and less than one percent, each, Asian and Native American.

The Coordinating Board of the Texas College and University system oversees public and independent institutions divided into a number of systems, each with its own governing board and serves as a statewide planning and policy-making body to ensure quality and efficiency for Texas higher education. There are 37 public four-year colleges/universities, 48 public community college districts, and a public technical institute and a medical institute plus 43 private institutions. The general mission of the community colleges is to provide lower division arts and science courses, vocational/technical programs and adult education; universities are to provide baccalaureate, masters and doctoral degrees. Community colleges and universities have developed course equivalency guides and hold annual joint articulation workshops by program area.

University of Texas at Arlington was established in 1895 and became part of the University of Texas system in 1965. It is located in downtown Arlington, part of the Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex, and is the largest public or private university in the North Texas area. Its Fall 1983 student enrollment was 23,175 with a racial/ethnic distribution of 84 percent caucasian, 7 percent black, 4 percent Hispanic, 4 percent Asian and one percent Native American. Forty percent of the students attended part-time, 43 percent were women and the average age was 25.

UT Arlington offers fifty programs through colleges/schools and centers including: Business Administration, Engineering, Liberal Arts, Science, Architecture and Envrionmental Design, Nursing, Social Work, Urban Studies, and Professional Teacher Education. Admission for freshman students requires a high school degree with prescribed coursework and a combination of class rank and ACT/SAT test scores. Transfers must have at least a "C" average on all coursework with a maximum of 72 semester hours transferrable. Some colleges and programs have additional requirements.

Dallas Community College District established in 1965, consists of seven colleges and is governed by a Board of Trustees. The two institutions participating in the study were El Centro College and Mountain View College. **El Centro College**, the first college of the system to be built, is located in downtown Dallas. The Fall 1983 enrollment was 6,313 with a racial/ethnic

distribution of 39 percent caucasian, 49 percent black, 8 percent Hispanic, 2 percent Asian and less than 1 percent Native American. Women represented 66 percent of the student population and part-time students 77 percent.

El Centro awards associate of arts degrees in academic transfer studies and associate of applied arts and sciences in forty technical/occupational programs. Sixty-five percent of the students were enrolled in the technical/-occupational programs. Admission to the college is open-door with a high school diploma or G.E.D. required for regular admission.

Mountain View College, the second college established in the Dallas system, is located in southwest Dallas County. The college offers associate degrees in academic transfer studies and in 26 technical/occupational programs. The technical/occupational programs enroll 52 percent of the students. The college has an open-door admissions policy with a high school diploma or G.E.D. required for regular admission.

Mountain View's Fall 1983 enrollment was 5,891 with 78 percent of the students attending part-time and 50 percent being women. The racial/ethnic distribution was 64 percent caucasian, 22 percent black, 11 percent Hispanic, 3 percent Asian and less than 1 percent Native American.

Miami, Florida

The Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA) encompassing Miami, Florida has the heaviest population concentration in the state with approximately 1.5 million according to the 1980 Census. At the same time, Miami proper ranks only 41st in population among the major cities of the nation since over two dozen independent municipalities and unincorporated areas are within the Miami SMSA. Miami does have the largest population of Cuban refugees in the United States and continues to attract immigrants from the Caribbean, Central and South Americas.

The public higher education system in Florida is made up of a State University System with nine member universities and twenty-eight community college districts, each with a local board of trustees. Community colleges are expected to make lower division higher education available within community distance of every citizen while the university system is expected to provide professional baccalaureate programs and graduate education. Initially, four of the nine universities were limited to two-year upper division and graduate programs. Subsequently each received legislative authority to include the freshman and sophomore years; however, maximum freshman enrollment caps were established by the State Board of Education in order to preserve the concept of a 2+2 system with community colleges serving approximately two-thirds of the first-time-in-college enrollments. Among the state policies intended to enhance baccalaureate achievement within its 2+2 system are an articulation agreement providing for the associate of arts transfer degree to satisfy lower division requirements and provide the transfer student with full junior class status, a statewide common course numbering system requiring all community college and university course numbers and titles to have comparable content and competencies taught, and provisions for universities to provide

feedback data to community colleges on performance of their students after transfer to the university.

Florida International University enrolled its initial student body in 1972 with 6,000 upper level undergraduate and graduate students. In 1983-84, after FIU had been authorized to add lower division classes, 14,868 undergraduate and graduate students enrolled. Bachelors and masters degrees are offered in colleges or schools of Arts and Sciences, Business Education, Engineering and Applied Sciences, Hospitality Management, and Public Affairs and Service. Admission to the freshman class requires an overall "B" average in academic courses and a total of 1,000 on the SAT or composite score of 23 on the ACT.

In 1983-84, the racial/ethnic distribution of the student body included 2 percent Asian, 7 percent black, 39 percent Hispanic, and 41 percent caucasian. Forty-four percent of the new undergraduate student population were transfers from Florida community colleges.

Miami-Dade Community College enrolls approximately 60,000 students on four campuses throughout Dade County. Sixty percent of the student population attend part-time. The 1983-84 total advanced and professional (transfer) enrollments and vocational enrollments of students having completed a minimum of 15 credit hours included 48 percent Hispanic, 14 percent Asian, 1 percent black, and 30 percent caucasian. Developmental enrollments included 53 percent Hispanic, 1 percent Asian, 18 percent black, and 19 percent caucasian. Miami-Dade awards associate in arts, associate in science and associate in general studies degrees. Majors are offered in sixty-seven areas intended for transfer to upper division institutions.

The North Campus is located in northern Dade County and offers essentially the same range of programs as South Campus which is twenty-three miles to the southwest. The North Campus serves the most urban neighborhoods while the South Campus serves more suburban neighborhoods.

Newark, New Jersey

Newark is the largest city in the nation's most densely populated state. New Jersey ranked ninth nationally with a population of over 7.4 million residents according to the 1983 Census estimates, and is an integral part of the megopolis stretching from Boston to Washington, D.C. Newark is located in Essex County which has been experiencing significant population changes for the last two decades with a loss of approximately 160,000 in the caucasian population and a gain of approximately 180,000 non-caucasian residents. The latter residents have settled primarily in the older urban areas of the county, particularly in Newark, while the more affluent suburbs have experienced a growth in caucasian population.

Prior to the sixties, New Jersey was known as a debtor state from the perspective of its higher education resources, since a large portion of its college bound students were forced to migrate to other states for their education. During the sixties, 18 county community colleges and several new state colleges were established with the result that public institutions are now encouraged to seek a portion of the baccalaureate student body from

out-of-state. The State Board of Education has encouraged articulation between community colleges and state colleges with the Full Faith and Credit Transfer policy that provides for the guaranteed admission of community college associate degree graduates to state colleges but not to specific programs of study. This policy does not obligate Rutgers University or its various colleges, however; Rutgers has the unusual characteristics of being both public and private, depending upon the issue or program.

Rutgers University-Newark is comprised of seven different degree-granting divisions including the two daytime undergraduate divisions of the Newark College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Nursing and the evening undergraduate division known as University College. The combined total student enrollment on the Newark campus was about 10,000 with approximately 20 percent of the full-time undergraduate enrollment being black.

The evening division (University College) offers baccalaureate degrees in 18 majors and has an open rather than selective admissions policy. Other units of Rutgers treat transfers from University College the same as those from other institutions and evaluate their transcripts on a course-by-course basis. The Newark College of Arts and Sciences has increased its admissions criteria with a corresponding decline in the number of transfers since 1980; the 1982-83 transfer population was approximately 40 percent below that of 1980. The majority of community college transfer students attend the Rutgers, Newark University college.

Essex County College is located in downtown Newark and was designed to accommodate 10,000 students. The Fall 1983 full-time enrollment was 4,304 and the part-time enrollment 2,849. The racial/ethnic distribution included 59 percent black, 14 percent Caucasian, 9 percent Hispanic surname, 7 percent Puerto Rican, and the remaining 12 percent made up of other groups.

The College offers 39 associate degree programs in the arts, sciences, and applied fields as well as 15 certificate programs in the applied fields. A comprehensive remedial/developmental program is offered to the approximately 95 percent of the students enrolling at Essex needing remediation in one or more subject areas (English, Reading or Mathematics). Over half of the students report the intent to complete an academic transfer program.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Philadelphia is the largest city in Pennsylvania, the nation's fourth most populous state, with a 1980 Census count of approximately 11.9 million. Philadelphia is the center of the Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area which encompasses portions of New Jersey, Delaware, and Pennsylvania that border the Delaware River. Philadelphia has the highest concentration of minority groups in Pennsylvania and has experience in-migration from far East and near East nations and the Caribbean.

Pennsylvania's higher education system is made up of 178 public and privately sponsored institutions. The public sector includes 14 community college districts, a state university system comprised of 14 former state colleges, and 3 state-related universities which are classified as "Commonwealth Universities" (Pennsylvania State University, Temple University, and the University of Pittsburgh). The latter institutions are quasi public having both private and public characteristics.

The State Board of Education is responsible for basic and higher education. Its primary functions have been coordinating among the sectors of higher education and advice to the legislature. A state level position paper advocating articulation exists but institutions are expected to develop their own articulation agreements on an individual basis. Access and minority policies have been limited to initiatives intended to respond to the Adams case requirements for the state owned and aided historically black institutions as part of desegregation requirements.

Temple University a privately charted institution, was found in 1884 to serve those denied higher education because of economic barriers. It has prided itself on being a "first generation" university and has a commitment to its urban mission of dealing with problems and needs of the City of Philadelphia. There are 11 schools and colleges that offer baccalaureate degrees in 114 different programs as well as associate degree programs in the School of Dental Hygiene and the College of Engineering and Architecture. There are approximately 19,000 undergraduate students among the 31,000 attending the university with 20 percent of the undergraduates black, 1 percent Asian, and 1 percent Hispanic. Over 50 percent of the undergraduates are transfer students.

Articulation agreements are developed on a college-by-college basis and often at the department-to-department level. Consistent with its tradition of dealing with urban problems, Temple University admits 6,000 students annually under a Special Recruitment and Admissions Program (SRAP) for persons who need additional basic skills but otherwise qualify for admission to college. The SRAP students are required to be full-time day students.

The Community College of Philadelphia is sponsored by the city of Philadelphia and in 1982 occupied a new permanent campus in the heart of the city. The 1982-83 enrollment was 26,535 of whom 53.4 percent were first-time-in-college. The racial/ethnic composition was 58 percent black, 31 percent white, 6 percent Asian and 4 percent Hispanic. The average age of the student population was 26.6 years while 62 percent were female. Approximately 31 percent of the student body enrolled for 6 credits or less while 27 percent enrolled for 13 credits for more.

The College offers associate degrees and certificate programs in 78 programs. In addition to associate in arts and science degrees, the College offers an associate in general studies program. The latter was undergoing complete review and revision at the time of the study.

Phoenix, Arizona

Phoenix and its larger metropolitan area of Maricopa County is one of the fastest growing areas among the "sun-belt" states. In population, Phoenix is the largest city in Arizona and the ninth largest in the nation; while Maricopa County is the largest county in the state and the twelfth largest county in the U.S. The 1980 Census recorded 1.5 million people residing in Maricopa County with a racial/ethnic distribution of 81 percent white, 13 percent Hispanic, 3 percent black, 2 percent Native American and 1 percent Asian.

Arizona does not have a state coordinating board for higher education. The three public universities are governed by the Arizona Board of Regents and the nine community college districts are governed by the Arizona State Board of Directors for Community Colleges. No articulation agreements have been established at a state-wide level; however, between universities and corresponding community college districts, course equivalency guides have been developed.

Arizona State University, established in 1885, is located in Tempe which borders southeast Phoenix. In order to respond to the rapidly growing population in the west side of the Phoenix metropolitan area, an upper-division two-year branch campus is being built. The Fall 1983 enrollment was 40,239 with a racial/ethnic distribution of 89 percent white, 5 percent Hispanic, 3 percent Asian and 1 percent, each, black and Native American. Women represented 49 percent of the student populatoin and part-time students 18 percent; the average age was 23 years. Half of the students entered the university as transfer students with 45 percent of these transferring from Arizona community colleges.

Arizona State offers 120 programs including: Architecture and Environmental Design, Business, Education, Engineering and Applied Sciences, Fine Arts, Law, Liberal Arts and Sciences, Public Programs, Nursing, and Social Work. Admission to the university requires a high school degree and upper fifty percent class rank or a 21 ACT composite score or a 930 SAT composite score for freshman students and a "C" average on all coursework for

transfer students. Some colleges and programs require higher test scores and grades as well as prerequisite courses.

Maricopa Community College District, established in 1963 from a preexisting college associated with a public school district is comprised of seven colleges and is the third largest community college district in the United States. **Phoenix College**, located within the downtown/financial area of Phoenix reported an enrollment for Fall 1983 of 13,137 with 75 percent of the students attending part-time. The racial/ethnic distribution was 80 percent white, 10 percent Hispanic, 5 percent black, 3 percent Native American and 2 percent Asian. Women represented 57 percent of the student population and the average age was 28 years.

Phoenix College awards associate of arts, associate of science, and associate of general studies in the transfer academic programs and associates of applied arts and applied sciences and certificates in vocational/ occupational programs. Sixty-nine percent of the full-time equivalent students were enrolled in the fifty-five vocational/occupational programs offered by the college. To be admitted to the college, a high school diploma or G.E.D. is required.

St. Louis, Missouri

The St. Louis metropolitan area is the largest in Missouri. Its population declined nine percent between the 1970 and 1980 Census with the city of St. Louis suffering the most severe decline of 27 percent. The 1980 Census lists the population of the St. Louis metropolitan area as 1.4 million with a racial/ethnic distribution of 77 percent white, 22 percent black, and less than one percent, each, Hispanic, Asian and Native American.

The Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education serves as a coordinating agency for public higher education but universities and community college share their own policy-making and governing boards. There are thirteen public universities and seven community districts in Missouri. Four of the universities including the University of Missouri, St. Louis function as a multi-university system under the authority of the Board of Curators of the University of Missouri. The Cooridnating Board has developed an articulation agreement where courses with a "C" or better transfer fully and transfer students with an Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degree with the requisite courses are given junior class standing at the public universities.

University of Missouri, St. Louis, established in 1963, is the largest university in St. Louis and the third largest in the state. Its Fall 1983 enrollment was 11,558 with 50 percent of the students attending part-time, 51 percent being women and an average of 24 years. The racial/ethnic distribution was 87 percent Caucasian, 10 percent black and less than one percent, each, Hispanics, Asian and Native American.

The University offers 42 programs within its colleges and schools: Arts and Sciences, Business Administration, Educaton, Nursing, Optometry, and Evening college. Admission as a freshman student requires a high school

diploma and combination class rank and ACT/SAT test score. Transfers must have a "C" average in all course work to be admitted with a maximum of 64 transferable semester units. Transfer students with an AA degree are accepted at the junior class standing but must still meet departmental requirements.

St. Louis Community College, established in 1962, consists of three campuses: Meremec, Florissant Valley and Forest Park. The two colleges participating in the study were Florissant Valley and Forest Park. St. Louis **Community College at Florissant Valley,** located in north St. Louis County, had a Fall 1983 student enrollment of 12,495. The racial/ethnic distribution was 80 percent Caucasian, 18 percent black and less than one percent, each, Hispanic, Asian and Native American. The average age was 27 years; women represented 56 percent of the student population and 73 percent attended part-time.

Florissant Valley offers 31 occupational/technical programs that enroll 37 percent of its students. It also offers associate of arts and associate of science degrees through the transfer program; 22 percent of the students were enrolled in these program with 41 percent undecided. Admission to the college requires a high school diploma or G.E.D.; some programs have additional requirements.

St. Louis Community College at Forest Park, located on the west edge of St. Louis, had a Fall 1983 student enrollment of 8,407 with 71 percent attending part-time. Women represented 58 percent of the student population and the average age was 28 years. The racial/ethnic distribution was 54 percent white, 44 percent black and less than one percent, each, Hispanic, Asian and Native American.

Forest Park awards associate of arts and associate of science in the transfer programs. In 1983, 18 percent of the students were enrolled in the transfer program, 33 percent in 36 technical/occupational programs and 49 percent were undecided. A high school degree or G.E.D. is required for admission with some additional requirements in specified programs.

Overview of the Report

Chapter 2 provides contextual information about the environments for postsecondary education in each of the study states. Chapter 3 introduces the concept of conflicting cultures as an approach to understand the barriers urban students experience in their pursuit of a degree. In Chapter 4, students attending urban community colleges are introduced through their own words and through the comments of those who work closely with them.

Chapter 5 provides a detailed treatment of community college programs and services as these impact on students interested in completing a four-year degree. Chapter 6 presents a similar treatment of the urban university.

Through Chapters 3, 5 and 6 we emphasize some of the barriers that students encounter in their pursuit of the baccalaureate degree. But the transfer process works well for many and an evenhanded treatment of the "urban connection" demands some attention to successful efforts aimed at articulation. This treatment is provided in Chapter 7.

In Chapter 8 we return to the perceptions of students to analyze the transfer process from their perspective. The chapter concludes with their recommendations for improvement, provided in their own words. Finally, in Chapter 9, the implications of the study are discussed in the form of a series of recommendations organized around the major actors we studied.

CHAPTER 2

THE STATES AND URBAN HIGHER EDUCATION

This chapter describes state concerns and priorities as viewed through the eyes of coordinating board officials. Also discussed are coordinating board practices and their relationship to the environment established for cooperation among institutions in the states participating in the study.

Millett (1984) has provided a useful classification scheme for presenting the differences in coordinating structures among the eight states. Two of the states, Arizona and Florida, have statewide governing boards for all public four-year colleges and universities. These same two states have a combination of a statewide board and local governing boards for public two-year colleges.

Five of the states; Illinois, Missouri, New Jersey, Ohio and Texas; have coordinating boards. While authority varies according to state law and custom; coordinating boards, in general, have authority for planning, budget review, and approval of new academic programs (Millett, 1984, p. 23). Advisory boards have only one or two of the three kinds of authority possessed by coordinating boards. Millett places Pennsylvania in the advisory board category.

Beyond the three fundamental types of authority possessed by coordinating boards, additional responsibilities or functions that may be assigned include: data collection and reporting, review of existing academic programs for quality or unnecessary duplication, monitoring affirmative action compliance requirements, and conducting legislatively authorized studies or programs. While there are important differences between the three types of state coordinating structures, in the discussion that follows, we use the term "coordinating board" to refer to all three arrangements to avoid identifying specific states.

The State Context for Postsecondary Education

State legislatures have been hard pressed by the rapidity and nature of change in recent years. Advocates for a wide range of social services initiated with federal support now seek state funding in response to current or anticipated shifts in federal priorities. Economic development, especially of the high tech variety, is as important to developing sun belt states as it is to those with high unemployment in the frost belt.

The condition of public K-12 education is of great concern to legislators, and occupies more time and attention than the higher education system. Blue ribbon citizen committees, legislative task forces, and state agency mandated studies have created a variety of reforms which ultimately will impact all levels of education. In two of the states, legislatures have reacted to the perceived social promotion patterns in the public schools by requiring elementary and secondary school performance assessment requirements. In three of the states, basic skills tests have been mandated for any student entering

teacher-training programs. However, in Texas, a recent U.S. District Court decision has enjoined the state from enforcing its testing program.

The initial results of testing programs at all levels have been devastating for minorities who have placed significantly below their caucasian counterparts. Charges of racial discrimination, cultural bias, de facto segregation, and the demise of minority teachers in the classroom have been advanced by national and local minority advocacy organizations including the NAACP. Court challenges have occurred in states other then Texas and the U.S. Supreme Court has yet to rule on charges that such testing is racially biased and violates the principles of equity and equal protection under the law.

In several states, legislatures have mandated course content in the public high schools with emphasis upon English, mathematics, science and computer literacy. In one state, high school academic programs must include courses comparable to those under the old Carnegie Unit Plan including at least four years of English, three years of math, two years of social science, two years of physical science, and two years of foreign language.

Legislative concern for higher education has its emphasis on quality. But what is quality? Based on legislative edicts, quality in the public university systems is more selective admissions standards, particularly as reflected in ACT and SAT test scores and high school grade point averages.

One quality enhancement provision enacted by several legislatures is a mandate to eliminate remedial course work from university offerings. In one state, the legislature prohibits universities from offering remedial programs and calls for them to contract with public community colleges for the remediation requirements of the freshman class. Funds are made available to accomplish this design.

Another quality approach taken by some state legislatures has been the requirement for academic skills tests to be administered as part of the admissions and placement process and again during the sophomore year before moving to the upper division. These tests have been given for several years on a pilot basis as part of a transition strategy to permit students in the pipeline to have the benefit of a grace period to benefit from instructional reforms within colleges and universities.

Legislatures are concerned with the impact of these reforms on minority students. Several states have provided for "exception rules" where institutions are permitted to waive cut-off score requirements and other adverse indicators for students otherwise judged qualified to benefit from the program of studies. Characteristically, the exception rule applies for up to 10 percent of any class enrolled.

Several of the states come under Adam's case federal desegregation orders. Interestingly, while staff members of state coordinating boards in these states referred to desegregation plans in one way or another, there was little evidence that the state legislatures were overly concerned or under duress as a result of federal desegregation pressures.

Prominent but of lesser priority among legislative concerns with higher education is the condition of private higher education. The general view is

that the public sector is overbuilt and so there is a danger to the balance between private and public institutions. Several actions of legislatures have been directed at this concern, including financial aid programs to provide tuition equalization, and provisions for program contracting with individual private colleges and universities either on the basis of the number of state residents in attendance or on a program basis in such high cost areas as medical education, high tech engineering programs, and similar fields.

State Coordinating Boards Priorities and Strategies

The priorities for higher education that have emerged among state coordinating boards in response to legislative concerns are remarkably similar. One that appears high on most lists is improved articulation between universities and the public schools. This priority is a natural outgrowth of the emphasis that legislatures are placing on increased university admissions standards.

A second common priority focuses on economic development. In the frost belt states, the emphasis is typically on retraining. In the sun belt states, the emphasis is on attracting new industry. In both cases, high tech seems to be the preferred industry, and while research universities tend to communicate and interact with key members of the executive and legislative branches in this pursuit, community colleges tend to look to the coordinating agency for appropriate inclusion in planning.

A third priority, described in one state as "selective excellence" and in another as "quality improvement," is designed to encourage each institution to build on existing strengths by replacing the traditional search for commonalities (that has driven much budget development activity in the past) with a search for unique strengths. As one state official observed, "If all of our public colleges and universities are emphasizing the same things, then we probably have too many of them."

Concerns About Minority Student Achievement

The safest generalization about minority student achievement is that if it is not already a priority it seems likely soon to become one. The states differ more in their ability to describe the extent of the problem than in their strategies for dealing with it. The most focused and comprehensive strategies were reported by states with good data on student achievement, disaggregated by race. Other states were cognizant of the need to collect such data but in its absence were less knowledgeable about the issue and more tentative about priorities and approaches.

In a state with a good data base, the issue was described as a "pipeline problem" in reference to the numbers of minority students dropping out before graduating from high school. The coordinating agency has been working actively with the state's department of education to promote reforms within the public schools. Promotion campaigns aimed at minorities were designed to encourage high school completion, enrollment in academic college preparatory

programs, and emphasis on math and science. Promotional literature, media spots, and statewide conferences were among the activities sponsored.

In a state with a high concern about minority student achievement, a major independent report prepared for a legislative committee provoked a sharp controversy over data used to describe the problems of minority achievement in the state's largest city. Within this state, there have also been two major reports on the issue presented to the coordinating board by its own staff.

A third state offered three different legislative programs that directly or indirectly were designed to enhance achievement for minority students. One focused on the assessment of basic skills and concommitant funding for basic skills instructional programs; a second established a fund for institutional initiatives aimed at equalizing opportunity while a third provided grants to increase minority enrollment and degree completion. Significantly, much of the credit for these programs was given to the state chancellor who used a combination of diligent effort and personal diplomacy to secure the programs from the legislature while encouraging institutions to respond to them as a priority.

A fourth state provides grants to public institutions to equalize educational opportunity through programs that improve minority student achievement. In 1983, the coordinating board for this state authorized community colleges to earmark up to 10 percent of staff and program development funds for minority initiatives. Community colleges are required to demonstrate that the initiatives for which such funds are used benefit minority students.

In a fifth state where concerns about minority participation and achievement are spelled out in a desegregation plan, a state official used national statistics whenever discussing minority groups reflecting the very limited data the agency had collected from its own institutions. Without being asked, the same official denied that the board had relegated minority students to community colleges:

> We are falsely accused of relegating minorities to the community colleges. We are not relegating minorities! Minority students choose the community college themselves because they are job oriented; the community college is the right place for them and it is performing an important service.

Beyond providing incentive grants and conducting special studies, some states sponsored staff development programs. In one state, workshops were conducted on the retention of minority students. The workshops have been less effective than anticipated because of the level of participation by senior colleges and universities and the representatives selected for involvement. The agency official responsible for conducting the workshops commented:

> Originally, we had hoped to have more senior administrators and faculty and, of course, both universities and community colleges. Not only are community colleges more likely to be represented but student personnel officers are the most frequent attendees.

The practice of delegating responsibilities for improving opportunities for minorities to student affairs administrators seemed to be pervasive at both state and institutional levels.

Minority members of coordinating board staffs frequently shared the views of their institutional colleagues on appropriate strategies for improving minority student achievement. In contrast to the position of most coordinating boards on residence halls for urban universities, a minority staff member argued, "Dorms are really important because they produce stability and a support structure where common values related to achievement can be experienced." A black vice-chancellor in another state described his philosophical ideal for addressing the plight of urban blacks:

> What is needed is the creation of residential schools for urban minorities. They need to escape from the present environment which is debilitating, even if they must be taken from the family. Even our best urban schools can't compensate for the neighborhood environment and the street culture in which these kids live.

Among other strategies proposed by minority staff members were special pre-service and in-service faculty training to make them aware of the minority student as a non-traditional learner, collegiate institutions adopting an urban school where faculty would work in the reality of the public school setting, and initiatives among the urban minority communities to raise the overall educational values and traditions of their people.

Articulation as a State Priority

Articulation between community colleges and universities has not been accorded the same priority as articulation with high schools, economic development, or selective excellence. As one individual put it, "Articulation is not the wheel that squeaks the loudest." The basic coordinating board position on articulation was stated by another official, "Our Board believes that any student with an associate degree should be able to transfer to any four-year institution in this state." Then he added, "This is a position that is easy to state but hard to implement; it is beginning to create conflict with some other Board objectives."

Even though the articulation wheel does not squeak the loudest, most state coordinating agencies gave at least some attention to the issue. Most will intervene if they learn that a four-year institution is treating transfer students differently from the way they treat their own native students. Program review powers are sometimes used to force articulation between related career programs. And funding incentives may be offered to encourage more cooperation. But there is the perception that articulation cannot be mandated and most coordinating board officials appear reluctant to antagonize powerful four-year college and university interests by supporting community college efforts to reduce transfer barriers. While most state officials are not comfortable in talking about competition among public institutions, few will deny such competition exists or that it impedes the progress of minority students who are in need of the supportive environment of a community college to offset some of the shortcomings of their high school preparation.

Underlying all articulation issues is a continuing concern with the plight of the public schools in general and those serving the urban minorities in particular. As one state official noted:

> Community colleges in taking on a special role in working with minorities have confronted an issue not unlike the public schools. How do you focus on baccalaureate opportunities for a population for whom the lack of preparation and poverty makes immediate employment their most urgent need?

State officials acknowledged that products of some urban community college campuses were not the equivalent of those produced by suburban community colleges, but were sympathetic to the problems such institutions faced. One state executive described the problems of dropout and reading levels in high schools and went on to note that, "Given the students they must work with, they may be doing more in terms of value added than most other institutions." He then added:

> The community college mission involves remedial responsibilities. This is a horrendous problem. Perhaps in the final analysis, a community decides where its students are ultimately placed.

From the perspective of coordinating agency staff, articulation problems occur in part because community colleges "have tried to address so many things that articulation has not been a priority. They think universities will come to them." Unfortunately, the colleges and universities that do come to urban community colleges are most commonly the ones that have the least to contribute to baccalaureate opportunities for minority students.

General Strategies

Most coordinating agencies described themselves as reactive rather than proactive for the simple reason that advocacy of controversial issues posed a real threat not only to the agency's informal authority but to continuing viability as well. In one of the states with a strong coordinating board, the chief executive officer noted:

> This agency operates in a very fine gray area. There is always a bill sitting somewhere to do away with us. We are criticized by institutions for not taking more of an advocacy role but the legislature also criticizes us for being too institutionally oriented.

In half of the states, relationships between coordinating agencies and institutions were fairly cordial; in two states, the coordinating board had lost important battles within the past two years. In one instance, an attempt had been made to force institutional reorganization, while in the other officials had attempted to close a program at one of the stronger universities. Coordinating board staff in these agencies felt their position had been seriously affected by these incidents and that any subsequent confrontations of similar magnitude in the near future would be catastrophic.

In states where relationships between coordinating agencies and institutions were less cordial or even openly antagonistic, state agencies seemed to spend more time preaching at institutions and less on developing institutional consensus about the need to address key issues. These more adversarial states had less well developed data bases and relied heavily on legislative relationships and political advocacy. While all state agencies use legislative advocacy, their relationships with institutions seemed to depend upon their relative reliance on consensus building as opposed to confrontation and on the personalities of those involved in leadership positions.

Coordinating boards devote most of their time and energy to four-year colleges and universities. While this arrangement is a natural consequence of differences in funding levels and governance patterns, in several states the relationship with community colleges approached benign neglect.

In all of the states the arrangement translated into a reluctance to support actively the interests of the community colleges when such interests were in opposition to those of the universities. The reactive posture of coordinating agencies along with their reluctance to be caught in the middle of conflict among institutions, restricted their role in articulation to serving as a voice for executive or legislative interests and to acting as a convening authority for representatives from involved institutions. The often expressed sentiment of community college administrators calling for a more active role for coordinating agencies in promoting course transfer and course acceptance did not seem a realistic expectation.

The name of the game in achieving state priorities is power, but as previously noted only two of the boards in this study possessed the authority to govern and community colleges were not included in their sphere of responsibility. The coordinating boards did use program approval powers as leverage to gain desired responses from a college or university. In one state, approval of any proposed program submitted by a public four-year institution followed several screenings beginning with a determination of impact upon nearby institutions, including community colleges. In several instances, boards required baccalaureate institutions to accept complementary community college programs as part of a 2 + 2 transfer.

Several other strategies were in common use. One strategy involved highlighting problems or issues in an effort to build consensus about the need for action before undertaking a search for alternatives to current practice. Task force groups made up of key institutional representatives were formed to delineate and analyze problems, especially in areas requiring interinstitutional cooperation. Even where changes in practice did not follow such analysis, positive results were reported in terms of improvements in the level of communication and mutual understanding.

Another strategy reported was the use of external pressures to stimulate institutional response. One state official commented, "We have used the desegregation decree to get the attention of the universities, particularly after the legislature called for concerted efforts by all institutions." In another state, a governor's priorities were used to exert pressure for change.

A fourth strategy involved the use of public disclosure and the power implicit in information. A coordinating agency had been able to get the

cooperation of all but two universities in assembling data requested by the legislature. In previous years, the agency had attempted to cover up for the recalcitrant institutions in the hope of encouraging future cooperation. "This time, however, we inserted in bold print at the beginning of our report the fact that it was incomplete because information had not been given by X and Y universities." The official then observed that the last two requests for information had not only been honored but data from these institutions was among the first to be received from all of the institutions in the state. Yet another coordinating agency published a list of admissions criteria for each of its public universities as a technique for spotlighting low admissions standards for several institutions despite legislative demands that requirements be tightened.

Coordinating boards also attempted to persuade legislatures to provide categorical aid beyond base funding to encourage institutions to focus on state priorities. Typically, these efforts focused on selective excellence and increasing the number of minorities enrolled. Funding strategies were also used as disincentives. In a state which had established enrollment caps for lower division students within the university system, reports of violations resulted in a funding formula change that stopped any additional funds when the caps were exceeded. The impact of these strategies is revealed by the discussion of coordinating board operations which follows.

Coordinating Board Operations

Coordinating boards exercise their influence on urban higher education primarily through the practices they follow in implementing the core functions of planning, budget review and program review. From the perspective of minority student achievement the first two are more important than the third. In addition to core functions, coordinating boards also affect opportunities for minority students through data collection and reporting, assessment programs and financial aid policies. Each of these major areas of state influence is considered more fully below.

Planning

The level and sophistication of planning activities varied widely. On one end of the continuum were those states that operated primarily in a political mode through developing responses to threats or opportunities as these appeared in the state environment. On the other end, coordinating agencies used well-developed strategic planning procedures designed "to raise issues among ourselves before someone outside does so."

The definition of planning as it is practiced in the 1980s differs markedly from planning typically done by states in the 60s and 70s. Five-year master plans were conspicuous by their absence. As one state official noted:

> We found the cost benefit ratio for long-range planning to be unfavorable in the current environment. In addition, we were

uncomfortable in forcing institutions to plan within pre-determined categories as we did when master planning during the 70s.

Instead of elaborate planning documents gathering dust on office shelves, the planning approach now is to identify and deal with selected issues which have the greatest priority or are most critical for the state.

The approach resembles strategic planning but is not so formalized or as extensive as institutional strategic planning. Typically, the planning process began with the identification of key issues through the use of data-based studies, development of position papers authored by staff, or the use of broad-based task forces focusing on areas of general public concern. Issues were sometimes identified by the legislature or the executive branch, but in other instances surfaced through staff dialogue supplemented by consultation with advisory committees drawn from the field.

The states involved in more sophisticated planning processes had strong data bases. Those not involved in systematic planning had very limited information and even less capability for collecting data in response to issues or questions raised by concerned policy-makers.

In a state with a strong planning process, the chancellor described the purpose of planning as, "raising issues of relationship between what an institution does and the larger concerns of society." Beyond mission differentiation, the coordinating agency had embarked upon an attempt to communicate to the legislature the concept of using additional funds as an incentive to encourage institutions to strengthen programs already at high quality rather than distributing additional appropriations equally over all programs.

In a non-planning state where the budget was described as the "chief policy instrument," one major concern was how to get out of the trap of justifying increases in legislative appropriations on the basis of inflation and enrollment. In this state, a lower level of inflation combined with declining enrollments in many of the institutions had caused legislators to raise questions about whether funding should remain level or decline as a function of declining enrollment.

Budget Review

State coordinating boards exercised authority over the resource allocation process primarily through the recommendations they supported for categorical funding programs and through the influence they exercised in the development of formulas used to justify budget requests and to distribute funds after legislative appropriation. Most states had developed alternatives to funding both universities and community colleges on a strict credit hour basis. In the larger states, formulas included differentials based on unit cost analysis either at the program or course level. The results of such sophistication were not always those anticipated. In response to the generally higher level of reimbursement provided for vocational/technical courses, one urban college had classified as many of its courses as possible in this category including

accounting, computer science and even psychology. Administrators willingly traded transfer possibilities for increased state revenues.

State funding policies impacted minority student opportunities primarily through provisions for funding remedial courses and support services. At the extreme, universities were excluded from state reimbursement for the student credit hours generated by remedial courses. More typical, however, was a limit on the number of remedial courses for which state reimbursement was provided to six to nine semester hours in mathematics, English and reading.

Universities received funds for support services primarily through categorical grants. Services beyond those supported through categorical grants were funded out of general university appropriations. Most universities were reluctant to take funds that could otherwise have been applied toward the support of research to use for the support of underprepared students.

While community colleges had fewer restrictions in offering remedial courses and support services, they encountered a different problem. Remedial courses typically were funded at levels lower than or equal to those established for college level students in related disciplines. As a result, the smaller classes required for effective remedial instruction could be offered only at the expense of increasing class size for the prepared students and special support services for minority students had to come out of the same revenue sources that funded all other expenditures. Community colleges were more committed to providing the support services needed by the minority and underprepared students than their university counterparts; however, they frequently had less in the way of available resources. While some states have a special funding category for developmental or remedial courses, none had yet faced up to the true costs of providing the services required to assist remedial students without limiting the opportunities for those who are prepared.

Where state level coordinating agencies had not identified minority achievement as a priority and structured incentives to encourage institutional response, strategies seemed less focused and more tentative. In one state, the board of trustees for the university system was struggling with whether to establish a special system-wide appropriation to promote minority student achievement. In this same system, the practice during the past several years has been to avoid the redistribution of funds among universities by treating all equally in terms of increments or decrements to the base budget. This practice has operated to the disadvantage of the less mature urban institutions within the state system. The stress on commonalities and equal treatment in budget allocation procedures presented a marked contrast to the emphasis in other states on unique strengths or selective excellence.

Program Review

The program review function influenced minority student achievement in indirect ways. Several coordinating boards used the approval of new baccalaureate programs as a wedge for encouraging more university attention to articulation with community college career oriented programs in areas such as

nursing and computer science. While such pressure caused considerable resentment among university administrators, the outcomes appear to be beneficial for urban areas where most minority students attend.

From a negative perspective, the resistance of coordinating boards to approving new bachelors' degree programs under conditions of fiscal constraint, have fallen most heavily on urban universities. Such institutions typically are newer and have fewer programs than their better established flagship counterparts. The flagship institutions frequently supported limits on new program approval at urban universities, in part because of concerns about competition for students and available resources. When programs are unavailable at an urban university, students must transfer or relinquish career objectives. The transfer process caused more difficulties for minority students because of the proportions who were economically or educationally disadvantaged.

Data Collection

States with the most sophisticated planning activity have the best information systems. Their less sophisticated counterparts rely on the federal Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS) as their major data base. Typically, their analytical capacity was limited. Most of their information derived from ad hoc data collecting. The only information available on minorities in one state was from institutional reports collected as a part of the requirements of a desegregation plan. Perhaps more critical was the limited use made of the information available to raise issues or questions about the direction and priorities of higher education.

Only one state had developed an information system for articulation between community colleges and universities in response to a legislative mandate that called for a statewide monitoring of transfers. Another state had developed a unit record system that provided aggregate data on the numbers of native and transfer students in the two-year and four-year college systems. This state did not, however, examine progress of transfers or provide institution specific data on the progress of transfers by major or by associate degree completers or non-completers. While this state had recently completed a pilot study of articulation practices and outcomes between community colleges and state colleges, the study did not identify race nor was the research university system included.

Assessment Programs

State coordinating agencies increasingly are assuming responsibilities for administering assessment programs either by legislative mandate or by policy of the coordinating board. Two of the states required a basic skills test for all prospective freshmen with only those who demonstrate a prescribed proficiency permitted to enroll in college-level courses. Those who did not meet minimum standards were not permitted to register for regular academic courses in the areas where they were deficient. Colleges were required to place students with deficiencies in remedial courses which carried no college

credit but did keep students eligible for financial aid. Both states have provided categorical funding to support these programs but have placed a limit on the number of remedial courses that can be taken. In one of the states, students who score in the lowest quartile (equivalent to below the 6th grade) are required to participate in adult basic education programs of public school districts before being eligible for community college remediation programs.

In two of the states, the coordinating agency was responsible for statewide assessment programs intended to measure the performance level of students enrolled in the lower division. In one, all sophomores attending the public community colleges and universities were required to complete all four sub-tests of an assessment battery before becoming eligible to receive an academic associate degree; however, successful completion of three of the four sub-tests permitted a student to transfer to a state university and a native student to continue in the upper division with the requirement that a passing score for the remaining sub-test be achieved before the student registered for the 37th hour of upper division course work.

Several universities in other states have adopted their own assessment tests which they administer to native students as well as transfers to avoid conflict with community colleges and the coordinating board. The results of these examinations were used only by the administering university. The state coordinating board did not have access to the information unless it was furnished voluntarily by the university.

Whether state or institution sponsored, assessment programs often were criticized as unjust or discriminatory for minorities. Several strategies have been used to deflect this criticism. Typically, assessment programs were initiated over an extended period of time with the goal of sensitizing and conditioning students to the performance indicators required to progress in the system. Trial runs, in addition to conditioning students, offered opportunities for improving validity and reliability.

A second strategy used to counter criticisms involved setting cut-off scores at very low levels during initial years and then gradually raising them. In one state, the cut-off score for the performance test required of college sophomores was actually 9th grade level. Coordinating board officials projected three years before the score would be moved to an appropriate level permitting those in the pipeline to complete while giving those about to enter advanced warning about the requirements ahead.

State officials and institutional representatives were in agreement that assessment programs were increasing academic standards for achievement as reflected in an upward trend in test scores. There was similar agreement that minorities had been adversely affected as a group because of their initial lower scores. Despite this assessment, officials were optimistic because minorities have consistently shown gains in test scores for each year the programs have operated.

In a state with a legislatively mandated sophomore assessment, some institutions imposed additional requirements before students were able to take the test. These requirements included grade point average and number of credit hours completed. Frequently, minority students did not meet these

requirements. As a result, the numbers taking the test were less proportionately than the numbers enrolled.

Minority officials reported their initial fears about assessment programs were being replaced by a growing hope that these programs ultimately may benefit minorities. As one minority official pointed out:

> It's true we don't score well on standardized tests. Maybe it is culturally biased but if that is a middle class bias, we'd better adapt to it because public higher education in America is a middle class system. When I see those scores for minorities going up, I know they are learning how to make it in the system.

Financial Aid

The policies followed by most state programs for administering student financial aid attempted to seek some balance between access and choice. Policies aimed at access, target funds on low income students and offer awards for both full and part-time students. Policies aimed at choice, restrict grants to full-time students and use total need rather than student income as the basis for making awards when the number of eligible students exceeds the dollars available.

In virtually all state administered grant programs of major significance, most of the dollars flow to students attending private institutions. Where states attempted to balance their emphasis on access and choice, the percentage of dollars received by students at private colleges was as low as 60. In states where the priority was clearly on reducing differentials between the costs of attending public and private institutions, the comparable figures was as high as 80 percent. In the latter states, few or no grants were received by students attending low tuition community colleges.

State financial aid practices in several states appeared to discriminate against transfer students. In the state where community college students were ineligible for state grants, transfers to more expensive four-year colleges and universities who became eligible for a state grant were classified as new students in the state's priority system with preference given to renewals. In the last year, for which information was available for this state, the program ran out of funds for students with a documented need of less than $4,600.

The decision to promote access by extending eligibility to part-time students had the effect of reducing average awards to full-time students in the state with the best balance between access and choice. The level of funding approved by the legislative required that state awards be limited to 44 percent of tuition and fees. The priority system for awarding funds also made it unlikely that community college students who became eligible for a state grant through a mid-year transfer to a more expensive four-year college or university would receive a state grant that year. By contrast, in a similar state where grants were limited to full-time students, the amount of a grant was refigured after a student transfered and students were awarded any additional dollars to which they had become entitled. The latter policy seemed better calculated to enhance the achievement of urban minority students in baccalaureate programs.

The form required for students applying for state aid also impacts on minority students who begin baccalaureate study in a community college. Because students attending community colleges in several states either did not qualify for a state grant or were eligible only for very small awards, they typically used the federal free-form in applying for a Pell grant in preference to the ACT or CSI forms, both of which require a fee and are administered in conjunction with testing programs in which urban minority students rarely participate. States with poorly developed analytical capabilities required the ACT or CSI forms to ease the burden on their own calculations. The effect, however, was to impose an additional hurdle between transfer students and the support they needed to maintain themselves in a four-year institution.

Beginning three years ago, those parts of Pell grants awarded for living expenses were applied to reduce eligibility for Aid to Dependent Children. The award of Pell grants may also have an impact on eligibility for food stamps. While the rationale for these changes is clear, their impact on inner city students living at or below poverty levels has been to reduce the number of students who can afford to attend postsecondary institutions. The effect of these policies may well account for a significant part of the decline of enrollments experienced by many inner city community colleges serving predominantly minority student populations.

Scholarships targeted for minority students were found in only three states and in two of these, the practice was established as part of the desegregation plan rather than as a special aspect of the state's financial aid program. The practice of preserving access through tuition subsidy seems to be in general retreat because of the impact of federal programs on tuition charges. However, one state has attempted to preserve at least a part of the practice by requiring institutions to set aside a percentage of their tuition revenues to be used for student assistance. Interestingly, a number of institutions in the state have developed the practice of saving such funds and then requesting permission from the legislature to use them for construction of buildings. In justifying such a request, one president indicated there were no needy students in his district. To encourage the use of these funds for the purpose for which they were intended, legislation has been adopted limiting the accumulation of such funds to 150 percent of one year's allocation.

There is considerable variation among states in the financial aid strategies they have adopted for dealing with policy issues related to access and choice. Several are feeling the pinch caused by eligibility for financial aid expanding more rapidly than appropriations. All were concerned about the availability of federal funds and several reported "short-packaging". The practices that appear to hold the most potential for contributing to minority student achievement included: flexibility in the application forms accepted, providing for students who qualify for financial aid at a four-year college after being ineligible at a community college and giving special consideration to students who were academically underprepared at the beginning of their postsecondary sequence.

Summary

In all of the states studied, minorities represented the fastest growing part of the student population and in some of the states were anticipated to represent more than half of the student population by the year 2000. Together, urban community colleges and urban universities accommodated a larger proportion of the state's total enrollment of minority students than all of the other institutions combined. The proportion of minority students enrolled in urban community colleges ranged from two to four times their proportion in urban universities. In most urban community colleges and universities, however, minority students were underrepresented in relation to their proportion of the general population but they were much less underrepresented in the community colleges than in the urban universities. In one city, minority students were over-represented in the community college system. As one official noted, "For them it is the only show in town."

In northern states, urban institutions have experienced significant enrollment declines. These declines have impacted more severely on community colleges than on universities. Among the urban universities serving large black populations, the proportion of black students in attendance has declined steadily over the last three to five years because of a combination of changes in admissions requirements and reduced availability of financial support. In most of the northern states, there was a sense that public institutions of higher education have been overbuilt in terms of student demand creating concern for the preservation of the private higher education sector.

From a state perspective, it appeared the planning and resource allocation process, when supported by a strong data base, could be used effectively to limit competition among institutions and to encourage attention to the issue of minority achievement. The systematic employment of such strategies as identifying institutional strengths, supporting institutions in their efforts to become stronger in those programs they already do well, encouraging the adoption of appropriate admissions standards, limiting institutional enrollments or alternatively reducing institutional incentives for pursuing growth as an end in itself, and differentiation among programs can all be used to improve articulation and strengthen opportunities for minority students. In states where priorities had not been defined through some form of planning process, institutions were left to their own devices to determine the amount of emphasis to be given to articulation and minority student achievement. In these latter states, there was far less evidence of institutional activity designed specifically to respond to minority issues.

CHAPTER 3

THE CLASH OF TWO CULTURES

Community colleges and universities represent different cultures in terms of their belief systems and the behavior that gives belief meaning. Waetjen and Muffo (1983) have suggested a continuum to describe the array of institutional missions found in urban settings. At one extreme are those institutions which take as their model the residential research university and accept their urban location as a matter of coincidence. At the other are socially involved institutions that function in part as welfare agencies to carry out a mission aimed at improving conditions of urban life for those who attend. In the middle are transitional institutions which retain their academic character without isolating themselves from the conditions that affect the people who share their urban location.

Inner-city community colleges are socially involved institutions whose concerns for their students are reflected in a wide array of social services and other adaptations. Comprehensive universities, especially those that serve a predominantly minority clientele, are torn between their desire to reflect traditional academic values and their commitment to a student population that differs in important ways from those best able to take advantage of traditional approaches. The frame of reference for research universities is not their urban setting but what Parsons and Platt (1973) refer to as the core university values of graduate study and research. The needs and concerns of their urban setting are secondary although not ignored.

Improving opportunities for urban minority students to earn baccalaureate degrees involves helping them to adjust to one or more institutions, each with its own set of beliefs and values. There are two complicating problems, both of which could lend themselves to institutional intervention. The first involves the absence of friends or relatives who have had experience with higher education and who understand and support the sacrifices necessary for its attainment. The second involves the lack of understanding among community colleges and universities of the differences in each other's culture. Accompanying the lack of understanding is an absence of respect for the differences in behavior these cultures produce. As a result, neither does very much to help students understand or adjust to the culture of the other. It may prove easier to deal with the first problem then the second.

The concept that community colleges and universities represent different cultures is not new. Jencks and Riesman (1968) described community colleges as "anti-university colleges" and concluded that they did not represent an alternative path to the top but rather a safety valve releasing pressures to permit universities to pursue their priorities without unleashing a populist backlash (p. 492). Weiss (1985) suggests that black students in an urban community college are between two worlds producing a culture that ensures most of them will return to the ghetto streets. While most observers reject the notion of the community college as a class-based tracking system, the issue deserves continuing attention in urban areas where community colleges are the major point of entry for upwardly aspiring minority populations. And the concept of class or culture is particularly useful in interpreting the

differences we observed. The ways in which urban universities and community colleges view themselves and each other have significant implications for understanding the barriers urban students must surmount in their pursuit of the baccalaureate degree.

Urban Community Colleges in Context

Perceptions of community college mission and priorities reflected a different range along the Waetjen and Muffo (1983) continuum than did the mission perceptions of the universities. One district chancellor characterized the role of a community college in an urban area as "providing access understood in different ways. Economic access, of course, but sociological access as well to people who had never thought of going to college." He mentioned new immigrants and Mexicans from rural backgrounds who should be encouraged to utilize the college for personal reasons even if they had no intention of earning a degree. "As institutions, we get people inside the door!" This chancellor, more direct than most, made it clear that he was not convinced of the importance of the baccalaureate to urban students "even if the Ford Foundation had decided to study such programs." From this chancellor's perspective, urban community colleges were created for people who were not candidates for a bachelor's degree.

The chief executive officer of a different district disagreed:

> The academic transfer function must be the primary cornerstone of the community college's mission. While there is a break between the high school and postsecondary institutions, we must recognize the continuum of the baccalaureate program made up of the community college lower division work and the upper division programs of the university. The complexity of fitting or being part of that program continuum is created by the university's calling for quite different and diverse elements among the various transfer majors which serves as an inhibitor to the student's orderly progress to the baccalaureate degree.

Most district leaders, however, were in agreement with the first chancellor suggesting either implicitly or explicitly a secondary or lesser role for the baccalaureate option.

The leadership of colleges serving a predominantly minority population were much less certain about the diminished importance of transfer even though most understood clearly the limitations their students would have to overcome in order to be able to benefit from baccalaureate oriented work. As one campus president noted:

> Transfer is one of our highest priorities at this time; the College can transform the lives of people in dramatic ways. It provides fulfillment for minorities who have not had access to upward mobility previously.

But overshadowing the more idealistic aspirations was the concern for enrollments. As one president noted:

> The current priority of this campus is to try to figure out ways to cope with a forecasted continuing decline in enrollment; the whole district has been geared to grow, the impact on budgeting of the current decline is a very major concern.

Apart from enrollment problems, the characteristics of students attending inner city campuses posed formidable problems for those who advocated an emphasis on the baccalaureate. The president of one inner city college who had previously served in the same capacity in a suburban community college in a different state commented on the contrast. In the suburban college, the student body was middle class and came predominantly from families who had experienced higher education and valued its outcomes. Inner city students came predominantly from backgrounds where higher education was neither understood nor advocated:

> There is a conflict in the value and cultural perspectives of our college faculty and the student body we serve which is not always consciously acknowledged or even understood on the part of many faculty and staff.

She believed the non-traditional students attending her present college required a quite different approach from her previous institution. She added:

> The faculty here are prone to quest for and even practice the traditional academic values and approaches, but what is worse is the tendency of some faculty to inappropriately apply dual standards in sympathy for the plight of the student, thereby further complicating the problem.

In response to the pressure of enrollment declines and an underprepared student clientele, inner city colleges have undergone significant transformations during the past decade. One campus president described her downtown college, which served a predominantly minority clientele, as a victim of its location. It had been the original campus of a multi-college district. As new campuses were established, its academic transfer population declined and suburban campuses increasingly served the middle class clientele that had previously come to the inner city campus. As a result, her college now emphasized career programs and community services with little or no transfer programming. She observed:

> All bus routes converge in front of the College. Those students who come during the traditional hours are from the socio-economic group that must use bus transportation rather than automobiles.

This reality was reflected in the College's Fact Book which reported over 60 percent of the students classified as meeting poverty standards. Contributing to the trend toward more emphasis on career preparation, the college has moved to vocational education in business, industry, and government as the "markets" toward which programming should be directed. One hour "flex courses" designated for saturation in a specific content area, and outreach classes held in corporate buildings, were the priority areas for educational programming. Despite these significant changes in educational emphasis the president reported no systematic assessment of student goals or

of student outcomes. The university to which students from this college most commonly transferred did not grant transfer credit for the flex courses.

The more suburban campuses of multi-campus districts (i.e., those colleges that serve lower percentages of minority students) perceived themselves as different from (and most commonly superior to) those that served predominantly minority populations. An administrator observed, "At --- we are the top of the line academically; our students who have gone on rate the quality of teaching here as higher than at their transfer institutions." At the same time, such administrators were not blind to the social implications of the differences in the student populations they served:

> The civil rights charges that our district colleges were deliberately placed to encourage segregation are not true from my experience. They were designed to promote access; the fact that they are segregated is a function of city housing patterns.

Most urban community college districts did not plan to achieve racially balanced campuses. Their policies, with exceptions for some of the more expensive programs, provided for similar offerings on all campuses; hence, geography became a determinant of the clientele served. Low income students consistently identified proximity and cost as among their most important reasons for attending a community college. Thus, the district policies which resulted in campuses being highly reflective of their neighborhoods produced heavily segregated campuses given the residential patterns of the cities where they were located.

While the intent of offering comprehensive programs in each location may have been equal access, student mobility patterns produced evidence that students did not always perceive equity as the outcome. Students living close to an urban campus who could afford transportation costs and had high aspirations frequently made a trip to the suburban campuses where they believed they would get a better education. Both urban and suburban campus administrators reported this pattern for the more able minority students. One administrator observed:

> Many college students travel for considerable distances to attend the suburban campus despite the absence of convenient public transportation and the fact that particular campus has the worst physical facilities of any in the district. It is seen as the top of the line and our better students who can afford going there will do so.

Faculty at the inner city colleges were also aware of the differences between their institution and their more suburban sister colleges. In one district where a less urban campus enjoyed the luxury of pre-registering 80 percent of their students and being able to require a writing sample during the pre-registration assessment process, envy was in evidence from a dean of the inner city college who observed:

> At the extreme, our students walk by and see a sign on the college marquee, 'Registration Going on Now', and they turn and say, "I guess I'll go to college" and in they walk. Their preparation is just about as limited as their planning for college.

Important to an understanding of the operations of inner city campuses are the procedures through which available funds were allocated to the individual colleges within a district. Typically, most resources were distributed on the basis of enrollments, with incremental changes reflecting routine fluctuations in the costs of doing business. While central administration in theory gave the campus considerable discretion in the expenditure of budgeted funds, in practice this amounted to charging the campus head with the responsibility of meeting relatively fixed costs that seemed always to increase at a faster rate than the annual budget authorization. Discretionary funds were scarce and tightly controlled at the district level. When individual campuses competed for discretionary funds, there was a marked tendency among senior administrators to favor technological solutions over new staff and to support the establishment of new programs over strengthening the old. This tendency helped to explain the fairly common perception at the campus level of underfunding for the task of working with underprepared students while at the district level there was frequently the perception of adequate or even generous funding. On several campuses, for example, extensively equipped individualized learning laboratories received little use while there was a waiting list for an inadequately funded tutorial program.

An attempt has been made to provide some protection in the resource allocation process for those inner city campuses experiencing a drop in enrollment. It is difficult to describe such protection as part of a plan to provide differential consideration to the campus serving the most disadvantaged students. Rather, it seemed more an expedient stemming from contractual obligations and political necessity. At the time of the study, planning was in a state of flux for most of the districts because of the need to adjust from a growth era to the present reality of no growth or decline. The environment called for broad-based strategic planning and most of the districts were moving in this direction, albeit reluctantly and often with a hope that a new emphasis on marketing would renew the growth cycle.

While the impact of funding constraints on programs and services seemed limited, some consequences did impact students pursuing baccalaureate work. Courses with limited enrollments were not offered as frequently; hence, many sequential and prerequisite academic courses were only available in certain terms or when a minimum enrollment was registered. This restriction fell heaviest on transfer offerings. Perhaps the absence or irregular availability of academic courses requiring prerequisites accounted for some of the student migration toward the more suburban campuses.

While many district and campus leaders believed that community colleges should be first and most importantly academic institutions, most inner-city colleges have moved far along the continuum toward a social welfare role. Extensive support services have been established in an effort to cope with the wide range of problems endemic to inner city student populations. Financial assistance, child care and health services address important student needs. But the emphasis on these services and the tendency for faculty to adapt academic expectations to student performance combine to shape an image that in many ways contradicted the ethos of an academic institution. The situation was scarcely helped in one city where we were told that the judge of a juvenile court "sentenced youthful offenders to the community college."

If urban community colleges are not all things to all people, they are nonetheless the most important hope for their urban clientele for breaking the cycle of poverty and despair. At the same time, districts must maintain a favorable revenue picture by offering courses which produce more scarce revenues than they use. The conclusion that there were no simple answers to questions about who urban community colleges should serve, or how, appeared inescapable.

Urban Universities and Their Environment

Urban universities were also subject to conflicting forces, particularly those characterized as research universities. State policy makers believed they should devote a considerable part of their effort to serving the urban areas where they were situated. Teaching and service, however, interfered with the university's effort to achieve major research status. In keeping with the desire to become major research universities, faculty members preferred to have the best and brightest students in their classes. The reality of their urban existence is that most students come from surrounding schools, many of which are inadequate by most standards. As a result, students are less well prepared and more occupationally oriented than the image of a research institution suggests they should be. There is finally the question of whether urban universities should pursue an urban mission or assume major research status and merely be located in the urban area. Among the universities in this study, about half were in each camp on this issue.

The most socially involved discussion of urban mission was provided by the president of a comprehensive university serving a predominantly minority student body who believed his institution, "should impact on the community. It should be a resource in terms of dealing with such urban problems as energy, economic development and even street gangs." He also emphasized the teaching mission of the institution and its responsibility to recruit and educate students who lived in the urban area surrounding the college. Finally, he noted a number of cultural and community service activities he felt should be offered ranging from free non-credit courses such as income tax preparation to family planning and consumer economics. In many values and priorities, this university seemed closer to the community college than to the research university. Nevertheless, it placed emphasis upon its role as an academic rather than a social institution, a distinction not always clear for the inner city community college.

A vice-chancellor at an urban research university provided a very different answer to the same question. While acknowledging the institution could not separate itself from the metropolitan area, he pointed out:

> That does not mean that this place is a high class trade school. There are certain components that are absolute in the university, regardless of its location; the arts and sciences and the quantitative disciplines. One cannot imagine a university without a program in physics or efforts in human help and the fine arts which are absolutely critical in urban society. Outside the core components are the professional programs in concentric circles.

He noted that identifying programs with the community did not mean the theoretical or knowledge generation values should be sacrificed in the interests of utilitarianism. When asked if there were dynamic tensions between community needs and university responses, his answer was, "You're damned right!"

Yet another president of a university serving a growing and dynamic metropolitan area identified external pressures from the power structure for his university to move from serving the inner-city expectations of an urban institution to those of suburban interest groups in order to become one of the flagship universities in that state. He observed that his faculty and administrators not only lived in the suburbs but embraced the quest for flagship status. This university, with the support of economic developers as well as local, state and national politicians concentrated its energies and resources on high tech research and development, medical education, engineering and business. There was little energy or resources remaining for the student and academic support services required to serve the urban minority student.

Among the universities participating in this study, six could be classified as present or aspiring research universities. One could be placed toward the socially concerned end of the continuum while the remaining two were somewhere in the middle range of the comprehensive teaching-oriented university. Despite important differences related to priorities, levels of maturity and differing state environments, the institutions evidenced an emphasis on academic values that distinguished them from the urban community colleges that shared their environment.

For most of these institutions, the fiscal environment has been constrained during the past decade, a brief interlude in the history of each state's flagship university, but almost half of the total lifespan for many of the urban universities. Fiscally constrained environments have produced competition between the better established public universities and their newer urban counterparts for programs, faculty lines, students and facilities. Where the competition has not been closely controlled by a system governing board or a state coordinating board, urban universities have seldom emerged as victors.

Securing approval for new programs has been difficult, as has been getting authorization to build residence halls. State policy makers have also been less willing to provide the resources necessary for research as distinct from teaching. As a result, the research universities generally are not satisfied with the quality of their students, the workloads of their faculty, or the status of their institution within the system of universities serving their state. By contrast, the comprehensive universities have been more concerned with teaching and more interested in developing linkages with their communities. While these institutions have also been concerned about student preparation, they have been less likely to see the solution in terms of more selective admission standards and more open to developing strategies for working with those who come.

With few exceptions, urban universities were created with the expectation they would serve primarily the residents of the metropolitan area in which they were located. As a result, residence halls were neither planned nor

authorized and now are either non-existent or quite limited. Coordinating and governing boards have been resistant to permitting the construction of residence halls, partly because of concern about the impact on the residential universities within the system. Three-fourths or more of the students commute from areas contiguous to the universities. As would be expected, urban universities enrolled the highest proportion of minority students of any institution in their respective university systems. Where they received criticism from state policy makers, and most did not, it was focused on retention rates rather than overall minority enrollments. Despite the numbers of minority students they served, urban universities employed few minority faculty or administrators beyond those who were responsible for special programs that focused services on minority students. The exceptions among the universities studied were institutions serving predominantly minority student populations.

Urban universities reflected the stress of accommodating growth during a period of fiscal constraint. Many of the campuses present an unfinished appearance because they lack the amenities typically found on a residential campus. Most of the buildings were new but the absence of maintenance has taken its toll. Walking around an urban campus makes it easy to understand why students may perceive the environment as cold or impersonal.

Many of these universities felt the public schools in their cities were the worst in the country. This attitude was shared by the news media as well. During the site visits, newspapers in each of the cities routinely carried stories about deficiencies and problems in the school system serving the inner cities. The extent of segregation in residential patterns was reflected in neighborhood schools. Administrators and faculty in several different universities described their respective cities as the most heavily segregated in the country. Each could make a good claim for that distinction. The underprepared students produced by the inner city schools presented the university with one of its many dilemmas. As one director of admissions pointed out, the entering level competencies required in university programs when contrasted with the underprepared nature of the high school graduates contributed to one major disjuncture between university aspirations and the realities of a commuting student body in an urban setting.

Minority students were said to perceive urban universities as hostile and sometimes racist environments. One black administrator of a special program for minority students summed up the situation when she observed, "Universities treat all students badly, but minority students perceive it as racist." In 5 of the 8 states, there existed an acknowledged competition between the urban universities and the adjacent urban community colleges for high school graduates. The competition was most intense in those states where the universities exercised very low selectivity and offered extensive remediation to the significant numbers of underprepared students who enrolled. For these universities, attrition was viewed as an escape valve to counter some of the detrimental effects of accepting students without the necessary academic preparation. In general, the universities did not see themselves as responsible for helping students succeed in the same way that community colleges did.

Universities uniformly emphasized their desire to attract a greater proportion of their enrollment directly from high school while at the same

time enrollment statistics made it abundantly clear that they rely to an ever increasing degree upon community college transfers. None of the universities in this study enrolled fewer than 50 percent of their junior class as transfers. Not all of the transfers were from community colleges, but typically the community college district serving the same urban area where the university was located contributed up to one-quarter of that university's total junior class or as many as one-half of all transfers. Most university recruiting efforts remained focused on the high schools, although attitudes are beginning to change as the demographics of the 1980s become increasingly apparent.

Contrasting the Two Cultures

A very noticeable difference between urban universities and urban community colleges involved the attitude and value structures of administrators. In community colleges, administration is a career for incumbents who typically prepared for their position through graduate training in educational administration. Many have not taught and those who have profess only tenuous connections with their discipline. University administrators, by contrast, typically have been prepared in a teaching discipline and seek to retain their credibility in that discipline through teaching while performing their administrative responsibilities. Most do not expect to end their careers as administrators and assume they will return to the classroom following some period of administrative service. As a result, they tend to reflect the academic values and concerns of faculty to a far greater extent than do their colleagues within community colleges. This difference in perceptions about the importance of knowledge, standards, and the academic experience contributes to some of the misunderstandings and lack of communication that characterized relationships between university and community college administrators in many of the cities. The attitude was nowhere more evident than in the priority attached to research and teaching as opposed to service.

Community college administrators, however, often have greater influence on curriculum and instruction than do university administrators. Community college faculty are more oriented toward institutional goals and are more amenable to changes perceived to enhance the education of the student or the vitality of the institution. University faculty, on the other hand, are primarily loyal to their discipline and have little affinity for institutionally oriented goals or priorities.

One community college administrator emphasized this difference:

> Universities are unmanageable from the perspective of institutional change. They are a conglomerate of diverse faculty groupings which are so autonomous as to be immune to priorities of central administration.

In their efforts to be inclusive, urban community colleges served many individuals who were not, by any set of the standards, able to engage in traditional college work. The inclusion of people who are sent by the courts or who wander in because it is warm, while praise-worthy by many standards,

makes it difficult to attract and serve other students for whom any alternative exists. The relative absence of adequately prepared students in inner city community colleges has an impact on the standards observed in class work, and limits the number of advanced courses that can be offered economically. As a result, inner city community colleges appeared to be in danger of losing their credibility in terms of the transfer function.

There was a substantial correlation between the emphasis on vocational offerings and the percentage of minority students in attendance. There are many reasons why this relationship may be both necessary and desirable. Inner city colleges serve the products of public school systems that, according to all descriptions, are experiencing terrible problems. By the same token, however, if schools serving the highest numbers of minority students consistently emphasize vocational education without offering high quality options in the baccalaureate area, and seeking out prepared students to take advantage of those options; the observations of Jencks and Reisman and others who allege community colleges are tracking systems, gain credence. The situation was not improved by the degree to which urban community college districts seemed to be among the most heavily segregated public systems of education currently operating in the United states.

Universities in contrast have been criticized because minority students are underrepresented in their student bodies. One difference between the university and the community college, reflecting the difference in cultures, is the absence of a priority within research universities on helping underprepared students succeed. Despite their absence of enthusiasm, some universities have developed excellent programs for the underprepared under categorical grants. Often these programs are directed by people who learned how to offer them through working in a community college. Where universities had proven programs helping underprepared or minority students succeed, they were not anxious to advertise them because this was not the sort of accomplishment for which research universities received status.

The number of minority students are declining in urban universities, but this may be a function of rising admission standards and reduced levels of financial support rather than a conscious decision by students to go elsewhere. The proportion of minority students attending many of the universities has declined by as much as 50 percent over the past four years. Despite this decline in the number of minority students in attendance, urban universities receive little criticism from state coordinating boards or legislators because they still have far higher proportions of minority students than any other institutions in their systems, and because their minority enrollments are substantially higher than those in flagship universities. Urban universities were criticized in some states for the high degree of attrition among minority students. Interestingly, among universities that have studied the phenomenon, the problem of minority student attrition was primarily a function of the performance of native freshmen. Minority transfer students who have completed two years in a community college did not perform in ways significantly different from other transfer students.

Course rigor and course grading standards clearly reflected the difference in values between universities and community colleges. In the community college, grading standards were said to be norm referenced (how the student performs in relation to others taking the same class) while in the university,

faculty members believed that standards were criterion referenced (measured against a standard that does not change with variations in preparation or aptitude of those enrolled in the course). Both university and community college faculty agreed that rigor was greater in the university and offered evidence to support this belief. Surprisingly, as noted in Chapter 8, a significant proportion of students failed to see a difference.

Community colleges were proud of their flexibility and the degree to which they adapt to student needs. They were supportive of students and considered self-exploration an appropriate objective for attendance. In most community colleges, you could get an active discussion on whether students should even be required to declare an objective during their first year of school. Universities, by contrast, assumed that students came with educational objectives in mind and were geared to assist students in achieving such objectives. They were uncomfortable about and impatient with students who did not know why they were there.

A Closing Word

Two dominant perspectives underlined most of the value differences described above. University administrators and faculty saw community colleges as overly protective and prone to condition their students to expectations which were inappropriate for university life. The supportive atmosphere of the community college and the willingness to go to great extremes to facilitate student growth were perceived as injurious for the transfer who needed to be self-directed and self-disciplined in order to succeed in the university environment. Community college counselors were perceived as indulging students to the point of creating dependency rather than self-initiative. Community college faculty were accused of offering watered down courses, often using the same textbooks as the universities in an attempt to claim comparability but without covering the content in scope or depth comparable to the university courses.

Community college administrators and faculty were proud of their supportive environment and criticized universities as uncaring or hostile to the needs of urban students. From their perspective, the attitudes and practices of their university counterparts were deliberately elitist and subversive to the goal of equal access to which community college staff passionately subscribed.

Underneath these philosophical differences was a smoldering resentment among community college faculty and administrators over the condescending attitudes they saw among university faculty and administrators. They felt excluded from high level planning because of the arrogance of university officials as well as their ignorance of the role community colleges could play in areas such as economic development or the improvement of opportunities in the public schools.

It would be misleading to end this chapter without noting that it has focused on those aspects of institutional culture that contribute the most to forming the barriers urban students encounter in their quest for a baccalaureate degree. In the chapters that follow we have tried to be more

even handed in identifying the positive practices that existed or were being tested by many community colleges and universities to improve transfer opportunities.

But the conflicting cultures and the barriers they produce fall most heavily on the opportunities experienced by minority students because they are the groups that rely most heavily on community colleges for access. Any effort aimed at reducing the discrepancies between minority and non-minority degree achievement most come to grips with the reality of institutional cultures and their consequences for movement within a state's higher education system.

CHAPTER 4

COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS: WHO ARE THEY?

The primary point of entry to postsecondary education for urban minorities is the community college. According to Astin (1982), initial enrollment in a community college reduces the chances that a student will persist to the baccalaureate degree. Yet several references suggest that the aspirations of minority students in terms of degree achievement equal or exceed their non-minority counterparts (Center for the Study of Community Colleges, 1985; College Entrance Examination Board, 1985). Any analysis which has as its objective the improvement of opportunities for minority students to achieve the baccalaureate degree must develop some sense of the reasons for differences between aspirations and achievement among those who begin in urban community colleges. In this chapter we present first the views of those who teach in and administer urban community colleges. Their views are followed by an analysis of essays written by students in the study colleges describing their home environments, their reasons for attending a community college and their future goals.

Community College Perceptions of Urban Students

The characteristics of students attending urban colleges reflect the changes demographics of the 80's. They are less well prepared and more likely to be members of a minority group. Growing numbers of international students and recent immigrants, both legal and otherwise, strain English as a second language offerings. In the midst of change, some characteristics remain the same. Most students have job responsibilities, family responsibilities, and are likely to be first generation college students. Some come because "it is warm and dry" or for financial aid, but the dominant theme is students taking their last chance for formal education. There is a sense of urgency about the need to be productive and to improve themselves.

According to faculty and administrators, fewer students are interested in earning a baccalaureate degree and more in obtaining job skills for immediate employment. But common understandings can be deceptive. Colleges don't know why students attend except in very general terms. Perhaps this reflects the level of indecision and ambiguity among students themselves. Colleges do know which courses students are enrolled in for reimbursement purposes, but most have little reliable information on such critical issues as the number who plan to transfer or their academic majors. The information that is available frequently is contaminated by an undecided classification including up to one-fourth or more of the total student enrollment.

Given the absence of hard data, we asked for estimates from faculty and counselors about student intentions. Such estimates were surprisingly consistent across the urban colleges studied. From 40 to 50 percent of the entering students were reported to have transfer as a primary objective. This estimate is very close to the results reported from a national survey of urban community colleges enrolling a significant number of minority students (Center for the Study of Community Colleges, 1985). The estimates of the number who

might actually reach this objective ranged from 7 to 20 percent, again not far from the 5 percent estimate of Cohen and Brawer (1982) and explainable in terms of differences in the population base from which estimates were derived.

Students want to enroll in courses that will transfer even if their immediate objective is employment. While this phenomenon frustrated faculty and counselors who had the reponsibility for reconciling such conflicting expectations, they understood and sympathized with student reasoning. Many of those who attend urban community colleges are very poor. They need to support themselves and to contribute to the support of their families as soon as possible. But such necessity co-exists with a long range aspiration to later return and earn a degree that confers professional status and more opportunity. Naturally, they want to apply as much work as possible from their short-term objective toward their long-term goal. The surprise is not that many fall short but that some persist against all odds and achieve the baccalaureate degree.

Information about student objectives seems likely to improve, partly because of district initiatives aimed at increasing student retention in response to declining enrollments. There is also a federal requirement adopted in 1984 requiring students who receive financial aid to have defined educational objectives and to be making progress toward achieving them. While there was some debate about the desirability of requiring a student to declare an objective, most community college professoinals seemed to feel the requirement was a step in the right direction. The impact has been particularly important for urban colleges where 60 percent or more of the student body receive financial aid. The effect of the regulation is somewhat attenuated by the general studies degrees offered by many urban colleges. Such programs place their major focus on credentialing whatever the student does rather than requiring a coherent sequence of coursework. Enrolling students in these programs keeps them eligible for financial aid but furnishes little information that is useful in understanding why they attend or how they can be helped to achieve their objectives.

Community college faculty members differ in their perceptions of the needs of urban students. One view was illustrated by faculty at a predominantly minority campus who stated that their students shouldn't be concerned with baccalaureate programs but rather with preparing for employment. They argued that the extreme poverty as well as the "obstacles of the system" made it unrealistic for students to dedicate years of time and energy to a goal seldom realized. Programs at this campus were heavily career oriented and those few transfer courses offered tended to be first year and introductory. One faculty member observed:

> Whenever I encounter a student with a declared goal of a baccalaureate and that student is academically able, I urge him to complete the present term only and then transfer to a baccalaureate institution. That's the only way they can be sure of receiving credit for the work they have taken with us.

In a different state, faculty members placed considerable emphasis on completion of the associate degree as a preferred transfer credential. They pointed to studies which indicated that degree holders performed well after transfer. Supporting the emphasis of these faculty members was a state policy

requiring universities to recognize those earning the associate degree as having completed their lower division general education requirements.

Assessment of level of academic preparation as a basis for placing new students in coursework is another important source of information about students. However, in many urban colleges, less than half of the entering students are assessed. The combination of declining enrollments and a very disadvantaged student population has disposed institutions to be extremely flexible in their admission and registration policies. Students may be admitted after the academic semester has begun. Since most students apply late, as many as two-thirds of those admitted may not be assessed. In urban colleges where students are assessed, more than 90 percent may require remedial English with somewhat fewer needing remedial math. The more suburban campuses in these same districts not only assess a larger portion of their incoming students but find less than half as many need remedial work. At one college for example, 150 students were in honors courses, 450 in remedial courses and 600 in regular college courses. An inner city college in the same district found it difficult to find enough qualified students to offer regular college courses, and honors classes consisted of instructors' efforts to enrich the learning opportunities for any student more than marginally qualified for a regular college course.

The Essays

Autobiographic essays were used to yield glimpses into the lives of students attending the urban community colleges we visited during the study. The students who wrote essays were selected by faculty from English classes whose racial composition generally paralled that of the institution. Each student was asked to address four broad questions in the writing assignment: (1) How would I describe myself and my family background; (2) Why am I attending the community colleges; (3) What are my present realities such as work, home life, obligations, and problems; (4) What are my future plans, aspirations and ultimate career and education goals? Anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed and students had the right to have their paper excluded from the project upon request. Many faculty members obtained the essays as part of a normal ungraded assignment administered on the first day of the semester to check placement in their English classes.

Of the 796 papers recieved; 127 were produced by students in developmental or remedial classes, 422 come from English 100 or more advanced writing classes and 246 were not classified by the level of course involved. Developmental classes enrolled a slightly higher ratio of minority students than English 100 or the non-classified population. Forty-five percent of the respondents, were black, 8 percent Hispanic and 36 percent were caucasian. Nearly two-thirds of the total sample were female, reflecting in part the reduced number of minority males attending college. Seventy-nine percent were in the 18-24 year old range emphasizing the continuing importance of urban colleges to younger student populations despite the high percentages of part-timers that typically enroll. The proportion of students below the age of 25 was not very different from the 70 percent figure reported by Davila (1985) who included eight four-year institutions in her ten institution sample.

Forty-five percent did not report marital status. Of those who did, 71 percent were single and among those single, 13 percent indicated they were parents and heads of a household. A few of the married respondents reported their spouse also attended the community college.

Many of the students come from large families. The range of siblings reported was from 1 to 21 with a median of 4. An overwhelming majority indicated they were first in their family to pursue postsecondary education. While the students producing the essays were a sample of convenience, their characteristics resembled those reported for transfer students in Chapter 8 of this report, as well as the characteristics of students among participating commiunity colleges as revealed in their fact books and statistical summaries.

Analysis

The student papers were first read as they were received. The four questions used to structure student response provided general direction but were too broad to offer meaningful analysis. Coding categories were developed for each of the questions to yield quantitative data (size of family, ages, years of experience) and descriptive information (influence of family attitudes, role models, self perception) Using the coding system, each student paper was read by two different readers and code numbers recorded on the margin. Subsequently, the two sets were examined and any discrepancy resolved to produce a predominant coding for each student paper. The typology that resulted is summarized in Table 4.1. The typology offered insights into the characteristics of students attending urban community colleges that are missed in statistical summaries. The typologies did not represent mutally exclusive compartments.

Most of the writers reflected aspects of more than one type. Annette, the second of seven children of a Louisiana rice farmer, was attending college to earn a Bachelor's degree in a business administration while working full-time as a laboratory assistant in a medical center to support her two teen-agers, the product of an unsuccessful marriage. She exhibited some of the characteristics of a Self-Worth Seeker, a Perserverer, a Believer and an emerging Self-Discoverer.

Sarah, a 58 year old black woman, who wrote that she was married when she was 20 and was still married to the same man, grew up in the South when high school was not a possibility because the fifty dollar a month tuition she would have had to pay to attend a boarding school (black children where she lived had access to public education only through the seventh grade) was more cash than her family saw in an entire year. Sarah completed high school in 1983 and planned to complete a B.A. degree. Her essay exhibited characteristics of the Perserverer and the Devotee.

Elements of the Prideful and the Innocent were evident in the essay of Thomas, a young black man, married with two children. Thomas planned to earn a baccalaureate degree in computer science, a field in which he already held a good job. Describing himself as "at first outraged" about writing an auto-biography because "who really cares about an average blackman's life," Thomas

Table 4.1. Characteristics of Students Attending Community Colleges: A Typology of Essay Contents

Type	Description
Self-Discovery	Finding self-insights or strenghts provides sense of fulfillment
Undecided	Doubtful about career, future education goals or one's self
Innocence	Guiless and trusting; unaware of the complexities of the outside world
Immigrants	Recent arrivals, excluding international visa students
Perserverence	Exhibiting tenacious commitment, effort, patience and persistence
Devotees	Dedication to and love for family; caring and grateful
Non-Conformists	Fighting against attitudes of family and friends hostile to college education
Seeking Self-Worth	Searching for approval or appreciation because of feelings of inadequacy or unsureness
Prideful	Expressing a deep sense of personal worth
Believers	Motivated by a faith in God and/or belief in education

gave the assignment second thought and decided that since only rarely are "blacks offered a chance to put in writing, words about themselves," he would do it because "anything of importance in America is written down somewhere."

Charles, a 45 year old who was born in the former Colony of British Guiana, had reduced his employment to part-time leaving primary responsibility for supporting his three daughters and himself to his wife. His ultimate aspiration was the achievement of a Ph.D.. It was his "prayer to experience the return of my country, Guyana, to a form of political and economic democracy... with God's help." His essay combines elements of the Immigrant, the Devotee and the Believer.

Sam was a 25 year old whose characteristics of the Innocent, the Self-Discoverer and the Non-Conformist earn respect, admiration and empathy. Sam came from a family where there had been very little education while his wife was the daughter of professional parents. Sam's major objective in addition to making a better life for his family was to be able to "stay in the same room with my mother-in-law, carry on a conversation and not be corrected." He wants to help his wife have a better life "but most of all prove my wife's family WRONG." The emphasis was Sam's.

George was a Perserverer and Self-Discoverer who described vividly the effects of poverty on an urban student. George had grown up in the heart of the city as one of six children whose parents divorced before he finished grammar school. His mother, while not well educated, worked hard to keep the family fed and clothed. George began postsecondary education in a rural university but was forced to drop out for financial reasons. Now attending an urban community college while working full-time as a clerk for the Social Security Administration, George hoped to transfer and ultimately complete the Certified Public Accountants examination.

The examples provided here could be duplicated almost by random selection from the essays submitted. Taken as a group, they presented a compelling portrait of people who attend urban community colleges. But the best way of communicating their lives and experiences is to provide a more detailed view of the typology in the words of those whose essays were responsible for its creation.

Self-Discovery

Self-discovery has occurred for many of these students in successes or failures in life. In almost all cases, discovery of insights and strengths have resulted in a sense of fulfillment that radiates from the student's words. Even where failure looms as a future possibility, strength from self-understanding can be seen. Regrettably, most discovery has come without much assistance from the educational system.

Various sources of success are reported by the Self-Discoverers, including positive feedback from attending the community college itself. A 20 year old black female observed:

> I feel that I am not up to the level that I should be to enter a four-year institution, so I enrolled in the community college to prepare myself for the four-year institution. I left Seattle, Washington to get away from friends and family, so that I could learn to adjust and adapt to any given situation, such as making new friends and learing my way around a city that is two times bigger than the city that I am from. This is my second semester and I have brought my grade point average from a 2.0 to a 3.2. Accomplishments like that let me know that I can excel and continue to do my best.

Academic success triggered the observation of another 20 year old female who is a single parent and works part-time to support herself and son.

> I've always thought I wasn't college material, but I seem to be hanging in there. I enjoy learning because one day I will have to teach my son some of the things I have learned. I hope to get myself a job and make something out of myself.

Joy of learning can be seen in other Self-Discoverers. Garcia is from Columbia and he aspires to complete a B.S. in Chemistry after his community college experience. His thirst for knowledge is reflected in the observation:

> Education is a ladder to success; the more we have the more we need. It is so pleasant to experience new areas in our knowledge and the best reward we get is what we learn in order to have a better preparation for the future.

Pauline, a 30 year old mother of two sons, described her reason for attending the community college:

> I am attending because one day I hope to have better things life can offer. I feel education is the way to achieve those goals. Also, as I stated, I have an endless love for knowledge and books, and I have to learn all I can.

Some Self-Discoverers turn to the community college as a result of a sense of being out-of-date as reflected in the comment of a Chinese-American student who came to the United States thirteen years ago and now is seeking a community college education as part of her quest for personal and economic enhancement.

> After 13 years of full commitment to my family and my children, I lost confidence and felt that I was out-dated. The community college provided me the up-dated knowledge and the latest technology. Most of all, I regained my confidence. Now, I realize that I am still fit for the job market. I'm looking forward to a better life ahead of me.

Those who learn about themselves as a result of life experiences often benefit even as result of failure or problems. Many veterans turn to the community college as a result of self-discovery during military service. A single 22 year old Hispanic male from a family of five observed:

> After graduation I enlisted in the Navy where I served for 4 years. I was just recently honorably discharged. So with all of the experience I gained and the traveling I did, I decided it was time to get back to school, and so now I'm in my first semester. My major is dentistry. I'm looking to complete two years of pre-dentistry and then to transfer and continue my education at a four year university.

The world of work is another frequent source of self-discovery. A 21 year old single mother of a one year old son wrote:

> I graduated from high school in 1981. The reason I returned to school is, I got tired of working jobs with no future. Jobs that have you out of a job faster than you can start working. Now that I have a son, I feel I am obligated to provide him with the same type of upbringing I had.

The job environment itself can be conducive to self-discovery as reflected in the statement of another single parent living at home with her mother and seven year old son.

> My co-workers (the ones I work with at night) all attend college and they encourage me to go.

Other Self-Discoverers reflect upon their earlier schooling and have grown in self-understanding as a result of introspection. A 24 year old male living with his divorced mother observed:

> I had never planned to attend a community college. I always planned on going directly to a four year school, but things didn't quite work out as I had planned. When I was in high school I was a C+ student. I could have done better, but I always procrastinated thinking I could get things done later. That's just why I'm here. When I should have been filling out applications for colleges, I was probably out somewhere playing basketball or something.

The Self-Discoverers represent a large portion of the population participating in the essay writing project. Interestingly, the writers seldom placed blame or fault for their earlier circumstances, but when they did, it usually was aimed at themselves. In only a very few cases did a writer criticize the educational system as responsible for or even a contributor to perceived deficiencies. This absence of criticism also pervades the survey responses reported in Chapter 8. Outsiders may criticize the school systems serving major cities, but their own clientele are appreciative and non-judgemental.

Undecided

The Undecides present a sharp contrast to college students with a defined goal. While they can be of any age, most were in the 18-24 year range. Three identifiable areas where students were undecided included career, future education goals, and one's self. Some declared they were undecided while in other cases, the obvious confusion of the writer evidenced indecision.

Approximately 15 percent of the essays communicated some element of being undecided.

Gail, who is 25 years old and a recently divorced mother of a seven year old, now lives with her mother while attending community college. She wrote:

> I cannot decide what I really want as far as employment is concerned. So right now I'm taking general studies courses. I hope that community college will help me decide what career goals to aim for.

A 19 year old black female is undecided about her educational goals.

> I have always wanted to make something of myself, that I know for a fact. The sad thing is that I am not sure what it is. I figure I can get my basics out of the way and then maybe attend a four year college somewhere. Sometimes I feel so smart and I try to set high standards for myself; then there are times when I feel so dumb and useless. I want to be something, so I figure college is where it is at.

Some of the Undecideds evidence a quest for broader self-understanding as reflected in the words of an 18 year old caucasian male living with his parents and four sisters.

> My future? The question mark applies. I have so many interests, desires, and abilities that I simply can't decide. I am a very creative person and if I were to spend 20 years of my life in a dry, technical or business job I would stagnate. But I have a need to know. I do not wish to give up my academics just so I can confine myself to one specialized artistic field. Right now I am taking only academics and the lack of creative outlet is driving me to lethargy. A paradox.

Several of the essays reflected symptoms of the undecideds even though specific careers were identified. A 34 year old single black mother wrote this confusing analysis of her career goals.

> My position at the company is a data processing production coordinator. I have been with this company since January of 1978. After finishing, my education here at community college, I desire to become a manager in the data processing field. At the same time I hope to succeed in a position as a flight attendant or postal worker. The reason I anticipated being a flight attendant is because I like to work with people. I feel that being a postal worker would be an interesting and challenging, blue collar position.

In almost every case, the Undecideds anticipate that attending the community college will be the key to answers about the future. A 19 year old female Pacific Islander expressed the sentiment typical of declarations of many of the Undecideds.

> I am going to a community college because I am not quite sure of what field I want to enter. At the community college I think I can experience different kinds of areas and pick the one best suited to

> me. A community college is a good way to go through a lot of the lower division classes because the classes are smaller and you receive more personal attention.

Community college students, in their autobiographic essays, seem not unlike many traditional freshman students at four-year institutions. pProminent in their written thoughts is a belief that the community college will offer insights and answers to questions of what career is most appropriate, what academic major will be best, or even "who am I?".

Innocents

The Innocents sometime motivate sympathy because they appear destined to disappointment and even heartache. They seem unaware of the complexity of realizing their goals and in some cases have already made significant investments of time and effort in an apparently misguided quest for a baccalaureate degree. Many of the Innocents either selected or were counseled into vocational or general education curricula during high school rather than the academic college preparatory track.

Two distinct groups emerge among the Innocents. While both are guileless and trusting, one group reflects innocence of "The System" while the other group is a reflection of self innocence. The System is the outside world which the student seeks to penetrate or conquer. The Innocents perceive their challenge as finding the key or ticket to success in such a breakthrough. For many, the credential is viewed much like the young black female living with her parents and five brothers and sisters who concluded her essay with the following declaration:

> I feel that life for me will be very different because of a Bachelor's degree, because it will allow me to get more than just a restaurant job.

A young black man indicated the intent to transfer to a local four-year institution in order to "get the B.A. and then go to work as soon as possible. Then, maybe I can go back at night for my Master's to become even more successful in life."

A married police officer attending the community college at night explained his quest to advance despite sacrificing time with his family.

> College has become very important to me because without it, I will not be able to advance in my profession. Also, I won't be able to capitalize on money given for degrees. This would mean less, and less opportunities for me to get a better job. So I now have been forced to get my degrees, so I can open door ways.

Such a belief in education as a salvation or cure-all was reflected in many of the essays.

Among those who reflected a self-innocence were students of all ages. A 53 year old mother of three married children who now was preparing to transfer to a university for a baccalaureate program in the fine arts declared:

> One day I will open a ceramic shop. I hope one day, that I will make some things, that will be accepted in the museum. When I hit the lotto, I'm going to Rome, and visit some of the places where Leonardo da Vinci worked.

The career fantasy of a young 24 year old living with his divorced mother and three siblings is reflected in the following excerpt:

> I hope to obtain an associate of science degree in my major which is Career Pilot-Flight Engineer.
>
> My mother is unemployed. My mother, my 3 sisters, and I are living on food stamps and a check sent by the government monthly. The only problem I see that would keep me from completing my educational program is financial problems.. For instance, I barely have enough money to pay for my textbooks and transportation to get to college every day.
>
> My reason for choosing to become a pilot is because a pilot's annual income is great. Although I know it is difficult for me to become a captain on one of the major airlines, I am placing all my effort to become just that.

Several of the "Self Innocents" reflected an oversimplification of what is needed to reach a career goal. A 22 year old female born in Puerto Rico and the oldest of 10 children illustrated this in her statement.

> Presently, I am working as social worker in the county jail. My dream is to be a lawyer. I would like to have my own office and be successful.

A 20 year old Hispanic girl living with her divorced mother and four siblings reported:

> I do not know what is in store for my future, one never knows what will happen. You can walk down a street and get killed for no apparent reason.
>
> But the goals I have set for myself and wish to reach are a brillant career in criminal law and maybe someday a district attorney.

A consistent thread among the Innocents is a belief in education as the pathway to opportunity. Yet, so many do not understand the requisites for successfully using that pathway. Most of the essays evidence little counseling or prior assistance from the formal educational system in understanding either the realities of education or the requirements which it places upon the student.

Immigrants

While international visa students were not included in the study, many urban community college students are recent immigrants. Every community college participating in this study had some recent immigrants. There were regional differences in the nationalities with greater numbers of Mexican Americans in the Southwest, Carribbean Hispanics in the Southeast and in the Northeast, immigrants from the near and far East in numbers comparable to Carribbean, Hispanic or black immigrants.

A 19 year old Pakistani bachelor living with his brother and family since migrating two years ago wrote:

> After I did my intermediate (grade 12) in my country with 1st division, I decided to leave for states to fulfill my brother and sister's desire and to fulfill my motto and then I joined---community college. I suppose it's better to join community college first as it takes less time to get accustomed with all the ups and downs rather than going the university where one comes across many problems, as the teachers in universities think that a student after passing the high school knows everything about the subject. So its better to make the base in community college and then join the university. ... My aim is to become a successful computer analyst. I became so interested when I started reading the information books on computers and try to go into its depth.

A single, 19 year old black female radiated dedication and commitment.

> Born on a little island in the Bahamas, I was the eldest of 8 ranging from 4 to 19. My father never had much of an educational background. He dropped out of school at an early age and learned a trade, that of a mason. ...We were basically your average black family.
>
> My main objective for attending ---- is to earn a degree, to reach the highest quota, to qualify myself to work in the business world. I am very ambitious and I want to make it to the top. My major goal in life is to achieve my master's degree in management. After completing -----, I intend to go to a major university and achieve this goal.
>
> I don't consider myself to be a real smart student. I work very hard to make good grades, but I believe the harder you work for something the more you learn to appreciate it. I have great determination and I don't intend to let anyone or anything stop me. I will persist until I succeed.

Some of the international immigrants encounter difficulties in the process. A 23 year old community college student described his experience.

> Four years ago I immigrated to the United States from Finland. My first year of residence here was filled with a constant battle against the troublesome Immigration and Naturalization Service which

attempted to deport me several times. Eventually I managed to straighten out my problems with INS, and now everything is going along peacefully. Just a couple of weeks ago I and my wife moved into a new house and for the first time in my life, I am seriously planning to put up a garden in the backyard. Previously this would have been unthinkable. I guess having a baby on the way makes one set roots down quickly. Over the last five years my home environment has undergone a drastic change from one culture to another but young as I was (17 years old) when I left home, I have been able to adapt quite successfully, at least in my own opinion, to the ever changing environment. The main reason why I attended community college is plainly and simply economics. ...Last spring I graduated from ---- community college with an associate's degree in radiology. Currently I am employed full time in that particular field; however, I do not gain the satisfaction or challenge from this work that would satisfy my needs. Thus, I am enrolled right now taking prerequisite courses here to gain admittance to the program at ---- university in the spring of 1986. Along with my educational goals, my plans include continuing community involvement and supporting my family life.

Another distinct immigrant population emerged from the urban areas in the Central states. These were people who had immigrated from the deep South to urban centers. While less recognized in the literature, the domestic immigrants represent a group with their own special problems and challenges. A young black man described his journey.

> We moved from Mississippi in 1977 and I received the unique opportunity to attend a high school that was 75% white. This after attending grade schools that were 100% black. I looked upon the years at South High as some of my best and most productive. I excelled in physics and chemistry and joined the wrestling team and the chess team. At South I discovered the world. ...Right now I am working to improve my grades and looking forward to transferring to a major four-year institution in early 1986. The goal there will of course be a BA in Business, while at the same time completing all courses needed to secure my Real Estate Broker's license.

Another immigrant typified the plight of many community college students whose work is seasonal, compounding their cash flow and related economic problems. He wrote:

> I am one of 17 children produced by my parents in Georgia where both were eduated to the 8th grade. When we moved here, I attended high school for a quarter of a semester before dropping out. I finally earned a GED in 1978. The economic realities I have to confront are the fact that I now have a job that is seasonal; it depends on the weather, whether or not it snows, as our product is rock salt. We receive the salt by barge; that in itself is a problem too, for if we don't receive the salt on time our accounts will be shifted to another salt service causing the layoff of half our work force. The economic reality of this is, you can't make plans, and if you get to save any money it's generally consumed during layoff, and should you

have to move while you're laid off people won't rent to you no matter how much you have coming in.

Yet, another domestic immigrant described her experience.

> I'm 21 years of age and a single parent. Both of my parents were born and raised in the state of Arkansas (known as the Land of Opportunity). They didn't receive a high school education because they had to work and help take care of their younger sisters and brothers. They didn't have much schooling but they read for us and made us read. My two oldest brothers didn't complete the 12th grade. Not because they had to work. I guess I really don't know why. My oldest brother was very, very, very smart. He was known as an "educated fool"; he knows more than the average person that completes a four year university with a degree. He was influenced more by his friends than anything else. Unfortunately on November 3, 1984 his life was taken away. He was a pedestrian on his way home and two cars ran over him. My sister and I are the only ones so far to finish high school and enter college.
>
> I attend community college because it is less expensive and I can also work. I like the atmosphere of my classroom but not the atmosphere of the student lounge and hallways. Some of the students act like elementary students. My teachers are great. The only real negative attitude that I have is late registration. Because once at late registration I was advised to get in the wrong class. My textbook was about 30 dollars, workbook about 15 dollars. For a while I could keep up. After that the teacher was long gone. It was as if she were speaking French. I ended up withdrawing from the class.

The Immigrants are alike in some ways and quite different in others. Whether international or domestic, recent immigrants encounter the challenge of cultural change. The essays document the problem of low income and the resultant concerns for financial aid or appropriate full or part-time employment. The international immigrant, on the other hand, identifies language barriers as prominent among perceived obstacles to college success.

Perseverence

Many among the community college students deserve the label of Perseverer as a result of tenacious commitment, effort, patience, and a persistence that awes the observer. Some have overcome economic deprivation, others refuse to succumb to physical handicaps, while still others have been faithful to their station or condition in life but now are emancipated. Among the latter group are older women who turn to the community college after their family has grown and seek pathways to a more fulfilling life. Many Perseverers begin at the bottom of a career ladder, as illustrated by a 32 year old black female who is working as a licensed practical nurse and is the sole supporter of four children.

> I dropped out of school at 16 years old. I became an instant wife and mother. At age 21, I returned to school and received a GED after six months. I then decided to become a certified nurse's assistant, since I was working as an uncertified one. After working in the field for one year, I decided to further my education. So, I entered a vocational school to become a practical nurse; which I completed in one year. But in order to be licensed, we had to take a State Board exam, which I passed. I have been working as a licensed practical nurse for four and one-half years. I have enjoyed my work. I have not taken any college courses until now.
>
> My reason for attending the community college is to become a Registered Nurse and then I will enter a university to become a Nurse Practitioner. My feelings and hopes are high concerning my education. I have come a long way and yet I still have a long way to go, but I'm not going to give up. ...Since I have to work full time to support my family, I can't attend school full time. But I have faith in myself and God. I know where there's a will, there's always a way.

Similar dedication to overcoming obstacles can be seen in Alice, a 21 year old handicapped female who wrote:

> I'm one of those people who likes school but sometimes find its hard. I've always tried my best to achieve as much as I'm capable of achieving. I've never let anyone, or anything stand in my way of doing what I set out to do. Even though I'm physically handicapped, I think this is what makes me so independent. Not everyone in my family has gone to college, just me and one other brother. No one expected me to go to college, it was my decision. I never listened to any of my friends when they would say, You'll never go to college, you'll never make anything of yourself, and you'll never have a career. But it didn't bother me because I believed I could do it. ...I'm glad I'm doing what I want and I encourage others like me to give it a try.

A 40 year old black widowed female has encountered illness most of her life. She sees education as her pathway to independence.

> In 1979 I became ill again, but continued to work until 1981 when I found it necessary to quit both jobs. My life's ambition is to complete four years of college, majoring in computers, so that I can get a job within the scope of my physical capabilities so that I can become completely independent once more.

A 51 year old mother of nine children who was a high school dropout and now is unemployed wrote:

> When my children got old enough for me to look for full time work, I did not have any job skills. I went to a clerk typist school, learned how to type and got a GED. I am now looking for work and taking night classes at the community college so that when I get a job I will be more qualified. When I looked for work as a clerk typist I discovered the age discrimination was a factor in who got

> hired so I decided to go to a medical training school because the chances of a middle age person getting a job in a doctor's office is better than getting a job in a business office. The main thing that's keeping me from making it now is that I don't have medical work experience. My plan now is to find work as a medical assistant and continue going to school at night so that I can become a registered nurse.

Some have already used the community college to achieve an initial goal of employment. They then return in order to realize their ultimate career goal. An inspiring illustration of this was written by a 36 year old full-time employed mother who credited the community college with opening the door of opportunity.

> During my earlier studies at community college, I mastered enough skill to place me in the position I now hold. On my return now, eighteen years later, I find my circumstances have improved somewhat but the college is still the stepping stone, that transition from where I am now to what and where I plan to be (an Early Childhood Education Teacher). ---- has been convenient in that it's allowing me to see if I can make the "grade" after all these years, without great expense, or without placing myself into a more sophisticated educational setting that I might not be ready for at this point.

Those who persevere in the face of economic barriers are aptly illustrated by Jane, a 38 year old "happily married mother of five children, three grandchildren, and one grand child on the way."

> Since my husband makes just a little over minimum wage, and is the only one working right now, it gets a little difficult to concentrate on studies, but that's what getting a higher education is all about--higher wages along with the sense of accomplishment as well as, the gratification of knowing you have fulfilled a dream. We both agreed I would not work during my first two semesters so I could obtain the highest grade average possible and so that I could get back in the swing of going to school full time again. ...I didn't take high school very seriously, I guess. In the 10th grade, I decided to drop out, but soon I was dissatisfied with jobs only "dropouts" could work on, so I returned and obtained my GED. Later, I enrolled in a vocational technical school and received a certificate which qualified me to work as a clerk typist. Since then, I have taken self improvement courses, attended seminars, and I am certified to work as a teacher's assistant. ...Poverty and illiteracy are the real crippling diseases of our society, not to mention crime, and I want to do something about it! I firmly believe if I had had harder pushes or more support while going to school, I would have excelled. That's what I want to do--help someone else help himself to excel in anything she/he chooses. Therefore, I've chosen the field of Psychology and/or Communications to recieve my degree in. At the present time, my husband and child are my pushers and my determination is the force which keeps me going.

The persistence among some community college students is amazing. A 22 year old black female, parent of a two year old daughter, living at home with her widowed mother and ten siblings reported on her present experience after having dropped out during a semester one year and subsequently being placed on academic probation at another time.

> This is my third attempt (in a junior college) and one which I'm determined will be successful. I'm studying here to become a registered nurse and I intend to get a BS by attending ---- university.

Others are adamant in their determination, as illustrated by Doris, a black woman in her mid-thirties who is raising four children alone.

> The responsibilities of being a parent are sometimes difficult to handle, and also going to school at the same time. To accomplish my goal (a BS registered nurse) for the future, nothing must stop me in accomplishing and receiving my certificate. I will do without to make ends meet.

The supporting hand of the community college and its personnel is sometimes reflected in comments of the Perseverers. Mary is a mother with four children, three of whom are now on their own. Mary and her husband own their own home, "but it is heavily mortgaged and we need a new roof, painting and other repairs." Mary observed:

> And now I would like to tell you something that may help in your research project. I feel that the beginning of written materials and the ending of written materials are read and remembered best, and that is why I include it here. I'm attending school this final year on a scholarship. I should not have been able to attend otherwise. My husband makes enough money to disqualify me for financial aid. Our debts are staggering after the years of child rearing. The scholarship is great and pays my class fees. I had a problem trying to get the money together for books and other materials. I thought I was going to have to withdraw. It seems that you have to have applied for financial aid to get a book loan and that only would have helped me the first year if I had. What does the scholarship student do who cannot buy books? My books alone are about $87. I was fortunate in help from staff personnel in finding me work in their department. One instructor even loaned me the money to buy my books so that I wouldn't fall too far behind. I can't help thinking of the student in my situation, who is struggling to support herself. The problem of buying books, even if tuition is free, can be a real hardship at this time of their life.

The Perseverers emanate an admirable seriousness of purpose and tenacity which cannot truly be understood in statistical reports on retention. The human drama of struggling against odds, of questing for career goals, and the individual or family sacrifices confronting these students suggest the need for institutional policies and practices quite different from those designed for the traditional college student from middle and upper income families.

Devotees

A dominant and consistent expression of love and admiration for family emerges from a number of the essays. A strong sense of dedication to members of the family is reflected in frequent vows "to repay" or "make proud". This need is often a major motivation of the individual writer. In some cases, the Devotee eloquently acknowledges the sacrifices made by dependents, parent or even a grandparent. An 18 year old black woman lives with her grandfather who not only is providing financial assistance but also serves as a role model.

> I'm presently living with my grandfather. He is providing me with a home while I work toward my AA degree. Our agreement was that I work for a year to save enough money and pay for my first year tuition and fees after which he would pay the rest. Having saved this money the past year, I have the advantage of not having to work presently, leaving all my time to my studies.
>
> My grandfather is my mother's father and is 64 years old. ...He is attending college. ...This is his third year as a night student....He wants to get an Associate in Science degree in Business Administration. ...My grandfather's providing me with a home and financial help while in college is a great help but seeing him go to college and enjoying his studies so much is an incredible inspiration to me. With both of us making college education our number one priority, our lives together provide mutual encouragement.

Devotion to children prompts many of the older community college students in their quest. A 31 year old divorced mother wrote:

> "Great people are ordinary people with extra ordinary amounts of determination." When I decided to return to school, my confidence was low and community college seemed to be the perfect beginning, since it offered the small size and friendly atmosphere I desired and needed. As the single parent of three children, my education will beneift not only my future but their's, and this is where determination comes into focus. What greater incentive than to provide a secure future for the three people I most love? Of course, there are obstacles that must be overcome. On an adult's level of understanding it's alright for me to do without to further my education, but to ask three small children to understand that there won't be any Christmas because mama has to pay tuition is a painful dilemma. They are making sacrifices that children should not have to make. Indeed, this is reason enough to dig in and succeed to repay their sweet oblation. I, however, also have a strong desire to be the best that I can be. I do not want to look back in retrospect and say: "I could have been...." I want to say: "I am."

A 23 year old black woman described her love and devotion to her mother:

> I'm considered a black Cuban. I've been happily married for four years. I'm also the happy and proud mother of a three year old boy.

> My mother is a well educated person who used to be a school teacher in Cuba. ...My greatest aspiration is to be as knowledgeable in every aspect as possible. My boundless hope is to someday give my mother all the best, for being a perfect example. I have sincere and warm personal feelings toward people. I feel we all need one another. I would like to be successful without sacrificing someone else's job or happiness, but through my own abilities and hard work.

An 18 year old Cuban male reported:

> My family's economic status has never been a very good one. It has mostly been categorized by us as "fair". My dad has been unemployed many times simply because his job has been completed. He's a tile worker and my mom a housemaid. Since they never had a good educational background they were both very happy when I mentioned going to college. Even though college has never been a goal in my life, but then again, where would life be if not educated. I really enjoy my on-campus job and the people whom I work with . All very nice, talented and good hearted. I hope to be successful and give my parents things they never had before.

Interestingly, several of the Devotees are grateful for the discipline experienced in their home. A representative of this group, a young man who aspires to obtain a baccalaureate degree in business administration described his home environment:

> I have one brother and three sisters, myself being the youngest. While growing up my parents where strict, especially my father. Whatever rules he laid down you followed. Now that I am older, I appreciate the love and concern my parents expressed. I understand a lot more and am not as narrow minded as I once was toward the differences in growing up. I want to make them proud of me.

A male Hispanic described the discipline in his household in the first paragraph and then concluded his essay with a single declaration of devotion.

> I am 19 years old, a graduate of St. Mary's High School. My grade school and high school years were spent at private Catholic schools. I am the third son of four boys. Life at our house is like living with a Marine Drill Sergeant and Mrs. Brady of the Brady Bunch.
>
> I am a proud Mexican-Irish-Frenchman. All four boys have been brought up to be proud of what we are, very street wise and to respect all no matter what race, color or creed.
>
> My future plans consist of going to ---- university. ...Most important is to try to make my father proud of me.

The Devotees seem to reflect two different orientations. There are those who have a sense of love and appreciation from others who have served as role models. Usually these are parents or relatives. Some are grateful and devoted because of perceived sacrifices made in their behalf while others have been inspired by example and some now reflect upon the discipline or rules of their home, seeing them as expressions of love and well intentioned support.

The other group of Devotees are dedicated to serve as role models as a result of their devotion to loved ones. Among this group are single heads of household who want their prodigy to benefit as a result of the investment being made in higher education. Others are married and acknowledge the sacrifice, love, and support of a spouse. Caring and gratitude exemplify the Devotees.

Non-Conformists

Those in the neighborhood and family culture of some community college students do not accept education as desirable or practical. As a result, they become Non-Conformists in the eyes of their peers or even their family. Such individuals must overcome an additional obstacle beyond the financial and educational barriers typically challenging many who turn to the community college for access.

A black single female from a family of nine described the impact of objections from her family.

> It's been very hard to continue college because of my family discouraging me or financial problems. I initially started immediately after high school. But after heavy pressure from my family, who felt I was wasting my time, I dropped out during my second semester. I started working and finally, five years later, I am back! I hope I can support myself and complete my education.

Another female perceived a negative or indifferent attitude toward her college goals.

> Since my dad did put himself through college, he expects me to do the same, and not only does he expect me to pay for it, he thinks it's a waste of time for a girl to go to school. He's ready for me to get married so my husband will take care of me. I totally disagree. I'm determined to get a college education.

A 40 year old white housewife who also aspires to get a baccalaureate degree reported:

> My home setting includes a husband and four children. Two of my children are presently attending college and the other two are in high school. My husband had only one semester of college. At first he made fun of me going to college, probably out of jealousy, but now seems resigned to the fact that I am here.

At other times the Non-Conformist is the recipient of ridicule from the streets. A 27 year old black female from Jamaica indicated she feels strange in coming back to school but that it is something she had to do.

> I have always wanted to be successful in life and to make my parents proud of me, to have a good profession and be a good parent to my children, like the way my parents are to me, and that's one of the reasons why I am in college now.

> I have had friends laugh at me, call me all the names in the book just because I am back in school at 27 years old and I quit a good job, but that was not what I wanted out of life. ...I firmly believe and am of the opinion that whatever you put into your life you get back and that's what I'm continuing to work on.

A 20 year old female who is the first in her family to attend college reported on ridicule from relatives and friends.

> They always expected my mother's children to fail and never even finish high school, but so far my sister and I have fooled them all. ... I do what I want to do not what my friends do, I use my own mind.

The Non-Conformists have consciously chosen to be different in the eyes of family or friends. Their quest for education is at variance with cultural values of their environment. In some cases ridicule is experienced; in others objections were raised by loved ones, or indifference was perceived as lack of approval of an educational objective. From the predominant gender of the non-conformists, it is clear that sex stereotyping remains alive and well in some segments of American society.

Seeking Self-Worth

An identifiable group of community college students feel inadequate or unsure about themselves. In some cases, the sources of such feelings was earlier schooling or poverty, but usually a more encompassing sense of inadequacy prevails. At least part of the motivation of Self-Worth Seekers in attending the community college is the quest for approval or appreciation in the eyes of self or of others.

Miranda is a 20 year old Hispanic who lives at home, works part-time and attends the community college.

> The reason that I am attending community college is because I want to make something out of myself. I also want to prove to others as well as myself that even if I don't make it at least I tried.

A 22 year old female Mexican American openly shared her need.

> The reason I go to college is because I come from a very poor family and I would like to make something of myself. I would like to be able to live like a half normal family and I do like school so this would be the best for me....
>
> I would like to be able to become a doctor in the field of medicine, maybe with children.

Georjean was raised by her widower father and admitted being an insecure person with low self-esteem.

> Life is not always going to be peaches and cream. This is a lesson that I never seem to learn. I somehow keep expecting it to always be wonderful, which seems to prove very disappointing....
>
> I have come from an average middle class family. I watched my father struggle trying to raise us two girls after our mother's death. My father never finished his college degree because I came along; while my mother only graduated from high school in England. ...I graduated from high school with a "B" average. After high school I worked as a fast food restaurant manager for a year then went to Bible College. This is where I tried to find and understand myself; I was and still greatly am an insecure person with a low self-esteem, which I have put on myself by what I demand from me.
>
> The end will be when I have the Bachelor's degree in History or Literature. These degrees may not have a useful purpose in the working world, but for me, they will prove that I can finish something, improve my self esteem, and I will have enjoyed myself in the process. I have learned another lesson from returning to school. I have learned that I love to learn and that when I am not learning I am bored. No, life is not always peaches and cream but I never have to get bored that way.

Louise, a black, divorced, mother with a four year old son declared:

> But one day after I reach my goals in life and I'm a nurse, then I can look back and think about all of the hard work I did. And really feel good about everything and know that all of the hard work was worth it. Then I will know and will be able to tell my son that you have a choice in life to be able to climb to the top or stay at the bottom.

Margo, is a 25 year old white housewife with a seven year old daughter. She summarized the quest of the Self Worth Seekers in her essay.

> My reason for attending----community college are 1. to have a sense of worth, 2. to strive for knowledge, and 3. to prove to myself that I could do it. I had wanted to go back to school for several years but was afraid that if I did, I would end up being a failure. I was becoming so stagnant that I decided to see if I could cut it. I'm glad I did. I like the idea of being back in school. It is a whole new and different world. My hope and aspiration, as I have said before, is to become an interpreter for the hearing impaired.

The Self-Worth Seekers are obvious candidates for the supportive environment which is claimed by many as a hallmark of community colleges. The need for a sense of self-worth also appears to be gender related and covaries with attitudes that assign women to traditional roles denying their aspirations to professional status.

Prideful

In sharp contrast to the Self Worth Seekers are the Prideful. There was at least one individual in nearly every writing class whose autobiographic essay communicated a deep sense of pride and personal worth. The self assurance and delight with self transmitted a picture of an outgoing, outspoken, and radiant individual. The Prideful appear to have a joy of living as a result of their perception of self.

Daniel opened his essay as follows:

> I am a handsome Black American male and I want to be very successful in life. I am only 19 years of age. I am not married at this time. I know some friends who had married at this age. They didn't have the same concepts about life and they didn't make it. I would like to marry someone with the same concepts about life or come close, as I do. ...I feel that not one thing can stand in my way of graduating from community college. Most of all I feel that nothing can stop one from being a great success in life. I think if people have the right concept about life itself as a whole, they would be much better off.

A creative approach to the writing assignment is reflected in the essay of Adrianne.

> Standing in the mirror is a young black woman with a slender body five feet five inches in height. The young carmel shaded woman is myself. Staring back at me is a sensative, compassionate, and giving young lady with a childish voice. At times her behavior is quite infantile for an 18 soon to be 19 year old. She, Adrianne, is extremely shy among strangers, but around her family, she talks incessantly. ...If I, Adrianne, not the vision or image in the reflecting glass absorb and imbibe every ounce of knowledge that my professors pour into my mind through lectures, and learn to apply that knowledge, I can accomplish all that I desire to accomplish. ...I am the oldest and only girl of three siblings. I resemble my mother in her youth in many ways. At times I feel like her and there are times when I feel like my father. When the two unite, I feel like myself. If feel that I have the responsibility of setting an example for my younger brothers. ...All plans for the future are not yet written. Vague ideas circulate in my mind. I desire to become a teacher. I plan to teach pre-schoolers possibly in special education. ...To critique my future and present plans is a task of difficulty because I am unsure of the future and all that I want from the present. I am unsure of the ultimate goal, because today, I am taking chances; tomorrow is the result of my trying to reach that undecided goal.

Some of the Prideful attribute their traits to a parent. Sylvia, a white, single parent who lives with her divorced mother observed:

> My mom, who is also the head of our family, is strong willed and independent. I'm sure I received those traits from her. Overall I

like and feel good about myself. I think I'm a pretty terrific person.

Henry is an 18 year old who declared:

I'm very handsome and intelligent.

Marie is similarly pleased with herself and her home environment:

I'm a nice, sweet, adorable person. I enjoy doing fun things that are exciting. I'm middleweight and love to work out. My hobbies are talking on the phone, skating, swimming, dancing, going out, and many more. I guess you can say that my home setting is like any average American person. We will eat together, pray together, and most important of all, we watch after each and everyone. The reason why I'm attending a community college is because I plan to be Registered Nurse and Elementary Teacher. I enjoy working with smaller children and I want to make the sick better.

The Prideful can also be reflected in perceptions that the system is out of step. Kathleen is an 18 year old who observed:

The reason I am attending---Junior College is because I got an 820 on the SAT and the requirement of the university is 840. I have applied twice and have taken the stupid SAT test many times. I am an intelligent person who is very capable of going to college. It is really a frustrating thing to want to go away to college but can't because I am 20 points short of the requirement. I am taking the SAT again and applying again. Once I get accepted I will be ecstatic. I plan to become a Physical Therapist.

Believers

A prominent expression of belief in God can be found in a sizeable number of essays. Many of the writers express praise and thanks for blessings while others communicate an abiding faith that strength and guidance will come from the Almighty. A second faith which has been included in the category of the Believers is the abiding faith in education itself. In view of the problems and unpleasant experiences with early schooling, it is remarkable that such persistent expression of belief in education as a primary key to a better life should be expressed in so many of the essays.

An 18 year old Cuban female lives with her parents who migrated to the United States after working in the sugarcane fields of their home country. A 20 year old brother is serving in the United States Navy. She wrote:

I have two wonderful parents whom I admire very much. They have been married now for about 25 years. My father is employed at the same place since we arrived here from Cuba 14 years ago. My mother got laid off her job for one year now for lack of business coming into the factory. ...Each day that goes by I give thanks for being able to take advantage of the wonderful things the Lord has given me. And especially the opportunity to study for my career goal.

Some of the essays were written with an artistic flair. The opening paragraph of Tina's paper not only provides background information but insight into her religious fervor.

> It was on August 14, 1957 on the beautiful Island of Dominica, in the Carribean, when my parents gave birth to a pretty little baby girl. Because of their religious affiliation and knowledge of the Bible, they decided to name her Tina, the name of an important lady in Bible times. This little girl who has grown to be a young lady, but still single, is now attending ---- community college majoring in Accounting. ...My overall objective for the future is to render valuable and wide services in the realms of the positive and the worthy. With God's help I feel justified accepting the challenge.

A Haitian single male who works part-time and attends community college full-time commented on the demands confronting him from his work, school and church activities:

> Though I'm under a lot of pressure with school, studying, work, and church, I have learned that we have to do the things that we have to do, though we don't always want to. My plans for the future, to finish college with a degree, have a good job, then get married if it's the will of God and start a family.

There are also ardent believers in the value of education. Several Oriental students communicated a zest that approximated a deep and abiding faith. A Vietnamese 20 year old male wrote:

> The background of my family is not really too much because my mother only finished the second year of high school, my father finished some college classes. ...I'm starting my college education. My mother tells me to continue doing it, that I need that education and she wants to have a professional family because we are intelligent and we can do it. ...I came to this country four years ago and I finished high school so I say I better finish my education here because this is where I am living and I am continuing to live in and one can have a future and a good one here as in any other country. After I finish community college I will go to a four year college and major in Accounting and Computer Science, later I can have a family and can help them like my family helped me and I can give them an education something like mine. ...The background of my family helps me to see how important it is to have an education so you can have a good future.

An 18 year old black female aspires to major in business and achieve Baccalaureate, Masters, and Doctoral degrees. Her belief in education comes from viewing others as well as her perception of the relationship between education level and income level.

> First of all, the money would be greater with a Bachelor's degree. I feel that eventually a college degree will be needed to get almost any kind of job. People with an education seem to also have better chances in life and get more advances and have better advantages.

The Believers may be outspoken or quiet in their expression of faith. In either case, however, they receive strength from their belief whether it be in religion or in education.

Emerging Themes

The intent of this chapter has been to describe the urban community college student as a person. Many of the essays exhibited commonalities across the different cities in our study. In the remainder of the chapter, we discuss these commonalities, as well as reporting some differences between students from urban and suburban campuses.

Use of the Community College

Two reasons for selecting the community college were prominent. First, an overwhelming majority of the respondents indicated they turned to the community college because of its low cost. Financial need was a consistent barrier to seeking higher education according to the essays. Further, a majority of the students worked either full-time or part-time while attending college. Some worked full-time and attended part-time while others were able to reverse the pattern. But financial need was a dominant factor in their personal and educational lifes.

The second major reason was proximity of the community college to the student. This of course also relates to cost. Many indicated the community college was convenient to their work while others reported its proximity to their homes. Proximity was always discussed from an economic perspective, not from a time or convenience perspective. So low cost and proximity remain as they have been since the beginning of the community college movement, dominant variables influencing student choice.

Another clear picture emerging from the essays was the fact that most of those attending more urban campuses, as distinct from those attending suburban colleges, were the first in their family to seek a college education. The educational background of parents typically reflected high school graduation as the highest level attained, but it was not unusual for one or both parents to have terminated their formal schooling in the elementary or secondary grades.

A sizable number were using the community college as a proving ground. Some were forced to do this because they had been high school dropouts and needed to resort to the GED, while others acknowledged low achievement and poor grades as instrumental in the community college being their only opportunity for access. The open door policy and remedial/developmental programs became the key to access for them.

Older community college students, both male and female, reported previous attendance at the community college where they had completed courses or programs that had permitted them to find employment. Now, while still employed, they were returning to the community college in order to prepare

themselves for transfer to the university and for their ultimate goal of a baccalaureate degree. These essays give credence to the objectives of those who attend the community college for entry level skills and immediate employment while harboring long-range goals for a baccalaureate degree and a higher status profession.

The Students

The writers generally were happy people. A picture of love and caring emerged as well as a joy for life. Many of the writers were able to see humor in their situation and typically were optimistic about the future.

A large percentage of the essays, however communicated a naivete about careers. It was obvious that many students functioned at a fantasy level in terms of their awareness of the demands and expectations of a desired career. In identifying academic majors, students evidenced a lack of understanding of the prerequisites necessary to achieve desired goals. From these essays, we concluded that career counseling and advisement was an essential support service that deserves the priority it has been given by most community colleges. A positive attitude and appreciation for the community college and its faculty were evident in the essays. Older community college students expressed gratitude for educational opportunities which they earlier believed had permanently passed them by. College-age students expressed satisfaction or appreciation for their college experience and for the interest and support of faculty and staff. They, also, evidenced a belief that the community college was making a difference in their lives.

At the same time, many respondents expressed apprehension about attending a university by reporting perceptions of the environment as unfriendly and unsupportive. They saw the need to "prepare first" at the community college. The few who were critical of the community college in their essays felt they had been misguided by the system or by individuals within the college in areas such as registration, academic advisement, and financial aid consultation.

Role of the Military

One interesting theme that emerged from the essays related to the underrepresentation of minority males in postsecondary education. Nearly two-thirds of the essays were written by females. Frequently, they described the status of the educational and vocational activities of their brothers and sisters. There was a discernible pattern for male siblings to enter the military immediately after high school. Those who provided detail in the essays invariably indicated that the choice of military service over education was for the purpose of skill learning or training which would equip the sibling for a career. Further, among the essay writers who were veterans, it was typical to credit the military "for my way out" and for a career opportunity.

These writers provide evidence that many low income high school students see military service as more desirable than education because of a more

immediate pay-off, in addition to opening a career door upon return to civilian life. Also interesting was the number of minority women who gave their goal as enlistment in a branch of the military. In most instances, the career goal of military service following education at the baccalaureate level was perceived as assuring the woman a commission as an officer. The perceptions and career aspirations of minority females, thus seemed pitched at a different level than their male counterparts.

Suburban Versus Urban

As previously noted, two of the campuses could more appropriately be classified as suburban than inner-city. The socio-economic composition of both campuses was significantly more middle income and more caucasian. Parents had attended college more frequently and many were college graduates. It was not unusual for both parents to be professionals.

The autobiographic essays written by the suburban students seldom spoke of the neighborhood or the environs of their house. Many of the inner city students, in contrast seemed to express special pride or satisfaction in living in "a clean, quiet, neighborhood," as if such an environment was unusual among their peers. Other described their neighborhood as "safe" and one writer commented, "In our neighborhood, we look out for each other." It would appear suburban students can take for granted some of the living conditions that are noteworthy for many urban students.

Another striking contrast emerged from what appeared on the surface to be a common concern about financial matters described in different ways by urban and suburban students. Though working full-time or part-time was a common characteristic, it was clear that the urban student's financial situation was more precarious and the absence of financial aid or income from a job would result in termination of attendance. In contrast, most suburban students did not report the need to interrupt their education if they were unable to find work. Their parents could or would find a way for their education to continue.

Suburban students did address indebtedness and economic concerns in their essays as did their more urban counterparts. A majority of suburban student papers, however, described their financial obligation and responsibility to support a personal automobile and lamented the high cost of insurance; some implyed an unfairness in the system as well as in their parents in expecting the student to carry such a burden. Many of the suburban students also declared they were responsible for paying the community college tuition from their own income (even where both parents were practicing professionals). In some families, the student reported having to pay the tuition and personal clothing costs, while in others the student was only responsible for the automobile costs. Occasionally, students were required to pay a weekly or monthly contribution to the family. But the financial burdens perceived by suburban students, while real, represented a different financial dilemma than the survival issues confronting inner city students.

Concluding Observation

Many provocative concepts emerged from the comments of the urban essay writers. Some observed the importance of education to "make it" while others spoke of education as "a way out". In some cases, such comments were found in papers that described a happy family life, a good neighborhood, and blessings from God. What is the meaning of those words? The faith in education as a panacea would support a hypothesis that the writer searched for something not fully identified. As sociologists have observed, the educational system in America is built on middle class values and traditions. To succeed in the system, one must understand these values and function accordingly. Yet, it seems unrealistic to expect thrift of students who wrote that their meager earnings could not adequately meet the costs of textbooks. Similarly, the goals of many writers appear unrealistic in the extreme. And yet, America is built on the unrealistic aspirations of generations of immigrants who somehow found ways to achieve those aspirations, for their children if not for themselves. Whatever else one may conclude, it is not possible to write these students off as the product of a mistaken national emphasis on access. When one looks below the surface of test scores, economic uncertainty and previous educational performance, human beings emerge striving to realize the American dream in the face of many barriers. Many will not achieve that dream, but some will. But it is the dream that is important and not the success ratio. The community college for many of these students truly represents Americas' last frontier.

CHAPTER 5

URBAN COMMUNITY COLLEGES

The community college culture is clearly one of commitment to access and educational opportunity. At the same time, middle class values dominate the policies, practices and expectations of the educational program. In this chapter, we first examine educational priorities and then consider the impact of student service programs. We conclude by identifying the strategies urban community colleges have identified in their work to improve minority student achievement.

Declining enrollments threaten the ability of many urban colleges to offer the range of courses necessary for students to complete associate degree programs within reasonable time periods. The problem affects them in two ways. First, there are few advanced courses requiring prerequisites available in a sequence that would be acceptable to full-time students. In one college enrolling more than 7,000 students in credit courses, only three sections of advanced mathematics were available during a fall semester. Faculty reported that cancellation of courses needed for academic programs occurred because the large population of underprepared students and an emphasis on career programs left few resources uncommitted. In the case of this college, district officers had sanctioned cancellation of courses if they were available elsewhere in the district. The argument that low enrollment courses required for academic transfer programs need not be offered on every campus was common among the districts visited.

A second problem related to enrollment decline involves the difficulty of supporting high cost activities such as remedial courses at a level necessary for them to be effective. One college, in recognition of the difficulty of correcting student deficiencies, maintained a ratio of 15 to 1 in developmental courses but was rethinking this commitment because of the budget problems resulting from a shrinking enrollment. This same college offered a very successful English as a second language program but did not publicize it because enrollment increases in the program were outstripping available resources. The problems of enrollment decline and changing demographics were complicated by the fact that many states were reluctant partners in the higher education remediation enterprise and failed to make adequate provision for the support of this type of activity.

Educational Priorities and Practices

For most inner city colleges, transfer programs have not received much emphasis despite the numbers of students who say they are interested in transfer either as an immediate or long-range objective. At least some of the faculty interviewed suggested this was the case because their colleagues had been to quick to accept prevailing judgments about student academic disabilities and had failed to give adequate consideration to student potential. But the emphasis on career programs has also taken its toll. Administrators identified reverse transfers from universities enrolled in career programs as evidence of the lack of utility of baccalaureate oriented

education. At the same time, many faculty members conceded that a surplus of baccalaureate graduates was making community college graduates unemployable in fields such as accounting and computer science, jobs once regarded as well within the purview of the two-year college graduate. Growing competition from bachelor degree holders may partly explain the increasing number of community college students who indicate an intent to transfer while concurrently pursuing a program designed to lead to immediate employment.

Among some urban college districts there was an absence of concern about the extent to which courses designated for transfer paralleled the offerings at major receiving institutions. Differences in credit hour arrangements, course sequencing and prerequisites were justified on the basis of unique mission and the fact that other colleges (most often the ones to which their students rarely transferred) accepted them. Accompanying the lack of concern with parallel course structure was a lack of emphasis on disseminating information about transfer opportunities.

In one college, serving a minority clientele, a small bulletin board in an obscure corner of the counseling center displayed several dated announcements from four-year institutions not major receivers of the college's transfer students. In more prominent locations around the center and on bulletin boards at the entrance were displayed many attractive materials on career opportunities, job placement and personal development. The Center had available program and course guides for transfers, but it was not clear how these guides reached students unless they were sufficiently sophisticated to request them or sufficiently fortunate to have an individual interview with a counselor before enrolling, a set of conditions not applying to most minority students who enrolled.

In another college a large display rack, prominently located in the counseling center, held more than 60 brightly colored brochures, each describing a different occupational program. Among the brochures was one describing a new liberal arts program designed to provide the same assistance to students interested in transferring as the others did for those pursuing career options. The district in which this college was located was involved in a debate about whether to permit the development of transfer programs emphasizing academic majors. Authorizing such programs, whatever the cost or disadvantages of identifying required courses, might have done much to provide students with more of a sense of balance in institutional program emphasis. As it was, this inner city college was still ahead of many of its counterpart colleges in renewing its emphasis on the liberal arts during a time of declining enrollments.

Standards

The trend in the late seventies and early eighties has been to neglect transfer programs in favor of unique functions not shared with four-year colleges. A correlate practice, permitting students without the necessary reading and writing skills to enroll in all college parallel courses, has produced distrust about the quality and standards of community college courses among four-year institutions.

Community college faculty admitted candidly that the rigor of courses they taught did not match the rigor expected in the four-year setting. A chemistry professor observed:

> Let's be truthful. I've gotten used to the idea that we use comparable textbooks, but we cover fewer chapters and we give less rigorous tests. We're not communicating as much information.

Interestingly, the problem did not extend across the board. In allied health programs, selective admissions ensured a better prepared student body. A dean of one such program noted that course standards in his area were the same as anywhere else.

Perceptions of differences in rigor extend to the communities served by inner city community colleges. One institution had for nearly twenty years provided under contract the general education courses taken by students at two nearby hospital schools of nursing. Recently this responsibility was usurped by the university to which most of the students from this community college transfered. The argument advanced successfully by the university was that their courses could better prepare nursing students who wanted to earn the baccalaureate degree.

There appeared to be wide diversity in the standards applied for successful completion of the same course on different campuses of the same district. At one extreme, a major receiving university reported no measurable differences in writing and math competencies between students who graduated from an adjacent community college and those who entered the university directly from inner city high schools that fed both the community college and the university. This phenomenon could not be attributed to high admission standards in the university since it, like the community college, served a student population that by any measure would be described as seriously underprepared. Interestingly, in reading, where the community college required students to correct deficiencies, the university reported satisfactory preparation. In this instance, the use of an assessment exam accompanied by mandatory placement and the assessment of exit competencies clearly produced better preparation in reading among students who remained underprepared in skills where these practices were not enforced.

A different college in the same district, attended by a much less heavily minority student population was frequently mentioned by receiving universities as producing highly qualified transfer students who were capable of holding their own with native university students in advanced level courses. Such wide differences in student preparation influenced university recruiting practices and the evaluation of transcripts. One of two receiving universities had avoided entering into articulation agreements so transfers could be evaluated on the basis of the perceived quality of the community college previously attended.

Tolerance of different standards for the same courses in different colleges of the same district was made easier by the absence of systematic follow-up information. Districts had only fragmentary information on the performance of transfer students and such data was rarely collected routinely even though districts were aware of the potential problems caused by the lack

of such information. Problems of varying standards were partly exacerbated and partly glossed over by the use of norm referenced grading standards where substantial emphasis was placed on effort and progress rather than any defined set of expected exit competencies. Liberal withdrawal policies also played a role. Such policies in combination with norm referenced grading typically produced high grade point averages which in turn contributed to disparities between the grades earned by students before and after transferring. Such disparities were noticeably greater for transfer students from inner city colleges than for their more suburban counterparts. In one urban college, 80 percent of the grades awarded for the semester preceding this study were A's and B's or W's. Not surprisingly, many district administrators steadfastly denied that the colleges under their supervision observed different standards. But, they did so as an act of faith and not on the basis of objective evidence.

Administrators seemed largely unaware of problems involving course standards. In one urban community college, the president, concerned with the high failure rate in an accounting course, gave his faculty two choices. They could either develop an open entry, open exit approach to teaching the course where students could begin wherever they were and take whatever time was needed to succeed in the course, or they could develop a new course taught the traditional way in which most students would succeed. The faculty chose the latter course of action and developed a course in technical accounting. Success rates are now satisfactory to the president.

The example illustrates a common administrative approach in community colleges. If students don't pass courses in sufficiently large numbers, the problem is assumed to rest with the instructional methodology or the attitudes of the faculty. Accepting the idea that a majority of the students attending a college were unprepared to do much, if not most of the work offered and could not be brought up to acceptable standards through innovative teaching methods and instructor diligence, seemed to strike at the core of the philosophical concepts which undergird the open door community college. So the easier approach by far was to tailor courses to student capabilities. The deception was supported by the absence of evaluative information on student performance other than grades based on institutional norms.

Despite much evidence of the concentration of institutional resources in career program areas, many senior administrators insisted that equal emphasis was being given to transfer programs. In some respects their argument was a reasonable one. Faculty salaries represent the single largest area of institutional expenditures and most full-time faculty, hired in the early periods of institutional growth, taught academic rather than career-related courses. Even though the weight of evidence suggested transfer programs had been neglected in the past, there were efforts in most districts to establish a better balance between services to the underprepared and recruiting of the well qualified. Also observable was an effort to achieve better balance between career and transfer offerings.

Program Emphasis as a Function of Race

On one level there is much to be said for concentrating vocational/technical offerings on those campuses where students are the least well prepared to undertake baccalaureate oriented work. The problem arises when the campuses offering high concentrations of occupational programs turn out always to be located in areas serving high concentrations of minority students. Community college districts serving large urban areas have some of the most uneven racial distributions to be found in any sector of public education anywhere in the country. While districts are sometimes accused unjustly of having located campuses to achieve segregation, the enrollment demographics not infrequently supported the criticism. Districts may include one or more campuses that are predominately or almost exclusively minority; ten or fifteen miles away, a second campus enrolls fewer than 5 percent minority. Neither university systems nor public school districts incorporate such extreme disparities within common geopolitical boundaries. While segregated campuses can be rationalized in terms of the history of the development of urban districts, the situation becomes more problematic when racial imbalance is accompanied by educational programs that track minority students disproportionately into lower status occupations.

Concentrating occupational offerings on campuses serving the highest proportions of minorities while concurrently permitting transfer programs to decline in availability and quality approaches dangerously close to becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy where minorities become vocational/technical majors because no viable alternatives are provided.

While urban community college districts were vulnerable to criticism on the racial imbalances among their campuses, they deserve considerable credit for the progress they have made in achieving racially balanced staffs both at the college and district level. With observable results, administrators have placed high priority on recruiting minority administrators and faculty members. Indeed, several of the districts were led at the highest levels by minority administrators who as a rule appeared more concerned about standards and the erosion of transfer programs than their non-minority counterparts. The situation was not, however, uniformly positive. In some of the older colleges and particularly those experiencing enrollment declines, the proportion of minority faculty lagged far behind a changing student population. In one such college the caucasian president observed:

> The absence of minority faculty members is not a problem here. A good faculty member can deal with any student as long as he is not biased.

For the most part, however, a minority student has a much better chance of finding a role model by attending a community college than in the institutions to which they ultimately transfer.

The General Study Degree

Contributing to community college image problems was the tendency for most districts to offer a general studies degree. This program, while known by various names, has as its distinguishing characteristic the absence of requirements that students take courses for which other courses are a prerequisite. The program is also characterized by extreme flexibility in its required distribution so that it fits almost any combination of courses a student might conceivably take. Faculty described this as a "garbage program" because it was used more as a tool for keeping students eligible for student aid and for padding graduation statistics than as a defined objective toward which students might be advised to work.

One faculty member described the general studies program at his institution in this way:

> There are no clear goals and it is analogous to a bus full of passengers who have quite different destinations in mind with few actually aware of the final destination or the value of that destination in their own life.

Because of their character, general studies programs became the dumping ground for undecided students, for late registrants, and for students with weak academic backgrounds. In many instances, students from general studies programs have sought transfer credit despite statements by a community college that the general studies program was not intended for transfer. When this occurred, the credibility of community college academic programs with university faculty was seriously impaired.

Academic Support Services

In a previous study, the senior author reported on a decline in student reading and writing of connected prose observed in an urban community college. In place of text oriented reading or writing, researchers found students learning bits of information by scanning instructor handouts or copying notes from an instructors lecture. Students were then tested for recognition of information bits on multiple choice examinations. This fragmented learning process termed "bitting" concerned researchers because it seemed to foster dependence on the instructor rather than student independence in the learning process. (Richardson, Fisk and Okun, 1983).

The concept of a declining emphasis on critical literacy placed in context comments made by academic support staff in the community colleges in this study. Many such comments suggested a declining emphasis on critical literacy (equated with the increase in bitting) among study colleges.

Several librarians were critical of faculty and administration for not recognizing the key role the library plays in a baccalaureate education. They noted the university expects students to be prepared to do library research while community college faculty seldom called for much more than a book report

or supplemental reading. Public libraries in the neighborhoods in which low income students reside were described as typically quite limited in contrast with those in suburban neighborhoods. The same deficiency confronted the low income students in their public school libraries. One librarian observed:

> During our orientation days, students are brought on tour to the library. When I ask them if they know how to use a library and if they have used the library in the past, they will always answer in the affirmative. They don't want to be embarrassed by what they don't know, a fact which becomes apparent as I unobtrusively probe their level of understanding during the hour they are here. Yet, I cannot convince my college that we should have a one or two-hour course on library use.

Another librarian observed:

> This college has gotten away from the concept that the heart of the institution is the library because it is a commuter institution. Our students don't utilize or congregate around the library as they do at residential institutions.

At one college where the library was known as the Learning Resource Center, discussion of the non-traditional student as a learner provoked the following observation:

> Our minority students are visually literate, even when they are poor readers. They tend to learn better from the use of non-print media in classrooms than from books and other print media. Our faculty utilize this reality without considering the consequences on reading development. We are experiencing growing use of non-print media by our faculty and a decline in assigned library work.

The state where this institution is located has prescribed a minimum number of words that must be written by all students in public colleges and universities during their freshman and sophomore years. The director of the learning resource center observed that more and more faculty were using films and related audio-visual aids as the basis for student writing in complying with the state requirement rather than having students write as a result of assigned readings. He observed, "Our humanities faculty are the highest users of non-print media with science and the applied arts next in line."

Another librarian was critical of the testing policies and procedures at her college as faculty increasingly used multiple choice type tests, often utilizing computer test item banks and related automated processing. She declared:

> Our Hispanic minority is particularly prone to memorize. I don't know whether it is a cultural pattern or the product of their schooling. But they tend not to organize their thinking in any kind of synthesis nor do they analytically question what they have been learning. Yet, our testing policies reinforce that rote memorization.

The extensive use of multiple choice exams and the absence of assignments calling for student writing characterized the institution described in Literacy in the Open Access College, as well.

In addition to libraries/learning resource centers, most community colleges provided special laboratories and tutorial assistance to students who were underprepared in the basic skills. Administrators favored technological applications such as computer assisted instruction (the University of Illinois Plato System was used extensively in several colleges) over labor intensive solutions such as tutoring. However, minority students were described by faculty who worked closely with them as resistant to self-paced, automated, drop-in laboratories. Thus, it was not uncommon to pass nearly empty automated learning laboratories on the same campus where there was a waiting list for tutorial assistance resulting from inadequate funding.

Minority students were said to respond best to a structured learning environment where role models were present from whom they received support and encouragement. Despite this assessment, the use of learning laboratories on most campuses was voluntary, and record-keeping and follow-up procedures were not designed to maintain continuing contact with a student. The two institutions that did have highly structured monitoring and follow-up procedures supported by computer processing had the strongest and best designed programs for identifying academic programs. They also offered well-designed and well-balanced intervention strategies for helping students overcome their problems.

STUDENT SERVICES

Student Services have provided much of the leadership in efforts to adapt the community college environment to the needs of the disadvantaged and underprepared student. This approach has both its good and bad features. On the positive side, the most significant affirmative action gains have occurred among the student services staff. Partly for this reason, minority counselors and other student support service workers have come to see themselves as special advocates for the disadvantaged and the underprepared. Their commitment to these students has done much to promote the nurturing environment which is often cited as a major advantage of the community college in working with high risk groups.

On the negative side, the existence of a special cadre of staff who see themselves as protectors of the open door philosophy for the underprepared has produced fewer academic solutions than would be desirable given the increasingly apparent reality that keeping underprepared students enrolled and qualified for financial assistance cannot be an end in itself. At best, the rift between academic and student services staff slows needed change and contributes to dysfunctions in student advising. At worst, it can erupt into conflict that stymies efforts to deal with the issues of quality and standards.

In one district, academic administrators came to the conclusion that if transfer institutions did not accept "D" grades, perhaps the community college should change its policy as well. After considerable study and discussion

involving faculty, a new policy was formulated that would have had the affect of tightening standards. The proposal was stalemated when the student personnel administrators' organization within the district adopted the position that the policy was detrimental to the philosophy of the college and the needs of those minorities it served.

Other common areas for controversy between academic and student support staff included the appropriate use of entrance exams, whether course placement should be advisory or mandatory and the degree of rigor to be applied in enforcing standards for student progress. It is an oversimplification to present these issues as defining the boundaries between student services and instruction. Nevertheless, the differences were observed more frequently than not.

Colleges are taking steps to reduce the tensions between academic and student affairs staffs. In the 1970's it was common for colleges to have a chief student personnel administrator with status similar to the chief academic officer. Currently, the trend is to place student services and instruction under a single administrator rather than having them report separately to the president. We turn now to a discussion of the major areas into which student service staff are typically grouped. For each of the services, we discuss those practices that impact on student opportunities for achieving the baccalaureate degree.

Admissions

Urban community colleges, without exception, welcomed all who sought admission. High school graduates, adults with General Equivalency Certificates (GED) and those who were 18 years of age or older were all admissible. Some exceptions were even made on the basis of age. Interestingly, those with the GED out-performed high school graduates in several cities. Not surprisingly, those without the GED or a high school diploma were extremely high risk.

Admission to the college did not carry with it the opportunity to attempt the program of choice unless that program was low cost, could be taught economically by part-time faculty, and did not involve a certification examination following completion. Programs with these characteristics were typically quite selective. Many students spent as long as two years completing general education prerequisites and making up deficiencies before being admitted to a selective program. The competition for the limited number of seats available was stiffened by reverse transfers from four-year institutions who applied for admission to programs such as dental hygiene and nursing after having completed up to a baccalaureate degree program elsewhere. Typically, minority students were under-represented in these selective programs just as they were in the population who transferred successfully to four-year colleges from some community colleges.

Recruiting

Many faculty and administrators believed the emphasis urban community colleges place on employment as the reason for going to college has undermined the transfer function which traditionally attracted more than its share of full-time students. Urban community colleges commonly are the last resort for most of their clientele. The existence of this "captive clientele" was reflected in recruiting practices which tended to be traditional and conservative, except for sporadic advertising campaigns when enrollment declines threatened college budgets. Most of the burden fell on admissions staff who performed obligatory visits to high school counselors who, in turn, worked diligently to get their best prepared students into more prestigious institutions. Sometimes the efforts of admissions counselors were augmented by faculty either on a voluntary basis in the interests of self and program preservation, or induced by release time from other responsibilities.

One college used a "credit in escrow" program to encourage current high school students to enroll in college level courses, and two others had advanced registration policies to allow high school seniors to register for college level courses prior to graduation. Increasingly, urban campuses offered tuition scholarships to draw academically able students; however, the differences between the preparation of the students attending inner city colleges and their sister institutions were nowhere better reflected than in the experiences of one district where 100 such scholarships were available to each of its colleges. All available scholarships were used by a college outside the inner city while its counterpart institution had difficulty in awarding three.

Some districts have used extensive advertising on radio stations or in newspapers having blacks or Hispanics as their major constituency. In one district where these approaches were in use, a minority division chairman nonetheless observed:

> Community colleges don't really know how to recruit minorities. People no longer accept figures on how many; it makes a difference why you recruit. People want to know what is being done for those who attend.

Despite high minority enrollments in community colleges, the chairman had a point. During the course of the study it became clear minority students attended the most prestigious institutions to which they could gain admittance with a singlemindedness exceeding the patterns for their non-minority counterparts. Community colleges did enroll large numbers of minority students, but assessment figures, where available, suggested that very few of them were qualified to do college work.by traditional academic standards.

Assessment and Placement

All of the colleges in this study had well-developed assessment procedures for placing students in English and math courses. Most also assessed students' reading levels and some required a writing sample. Remedial courses were prescribed when deficiencies were identified. Clearly, the trend was in

the direction of greater rigor in assessment and less flexibility in course placement for students who lacked prerequisite skills. There was much talk of entrance and exit competencies, but only one of the colleges had actually implemented this model in its transfer programs at the time of the study.

Underlying discussions of greater rigor in assessment was pervasive concern about enrollment decline and the impact that more rigorous assessment and progress standards might have on this phenomenon. In discussions with faculty in one district those from the popular areas of business and computer science were vociferous in their support for keeping underprepared students out of regular classes. Their colleagues in the social sciences and humanities were strangely silent. When asked directly if underprepared students who lacked reading and writing competencies were a problem in social sciences and humanities classes, faculty members from these areas squirmed a little and then said, "No." In later discussions in this district and elsewhere, it became clear that faculty support for rigorous assessment, course prerequisites, and preventing students who lacked reading skills from taking reading intensive courses was often linked to job security and consideration of the impact of such policies on the opportunity for teaching coveted extra courses for extra pay.

Assessment procedures and the rigor with which they were enforced varied as much within districts as they did across districts. Some colleges assessed most or all of their entering students using math, English and reading tests supplemented by a writing sample. In such colleges, placement procedures tended to be mandatory, subject to the right of appeal. Interestingly, colleges with more rigorous testing and placement procedures did not seem harmed in terms of enrollment, despite the often expressed concern of many faculty members and administrators that enrollment problems were inevitable if greater rigor was introduced. Colleges with more rigorous procedures tended to be those with better reputations for academic quality and thus were the ones to which students migrated in search of educational opportunities.

This phenomenon does not bode well for inner city campuses serving high concentrations of minorities. Most of their students make decisions about attending too late for effective assessment and placement. Administrators with one eye on their budgets were reluctant to approve procedures that might discourage potential students even where they were sympathetic to the need for better assessment and placement.

Once assessed, students typically found themselves in one of three beginning levels of English. Again, the standards for initial placement differed within districts as well as across districts, as a function of the general level of student preparation. At one extreme, students were placed in the most elementary sequence if they read below the fifth grade level. On a different campus in the same district with a better prepared entering class, the comparable standard was seventh grade reading ability. About 40 percent of the students in the inner city institution were placed in the lowest tier. By contrast, the sister college reported placing only 20 percent of its students in the lowest tier even with the higher standards. The differences were equally dramatic for placement in the second tier. The inner-city college reported 50 percent of its students were placed in this tier based on a 9th grade cut-off point. The sister institution reported only 30 percent of its students in the tier using a 10th grade standard.

Many faculty members believe that reading ability is a poor predictor of writing skills. By preference, faculty members used writing samples whenever circumstances permitted. The procedures used in one college that assessed 97 percent of its entering classes were typical. Essays were read by two faculty members and if they disagreed on placement, the essay was read by a third person. Care was taken to insure that those reading essays remained unaware of the student's gender, age, or race. Without exception, appeal procedures were available for students who believed they had been misplaced. Students had the opportunity to talk with faculty members, a division chair, a counselor, and/or a dean. A student who did not utilize the appeal process still could be identified and moved by an alert instructor. Not surprisingly, faculty members reported satisfaction with placement procedures, especially where writing samples were used.

Assessment procedures in mathematics most commonly relied on instructor developed tests. Because inner city students are not well prepared, they avoid math whenever possible. Partly for this reason, fewer than half of the entering students were assessed in math in many urban colleges. The tendency to avoid math may be unintentionally abetted by the institution through a reluctance to require math in degree programs or through assessment procedures that permit students to enroll in almost all courses except English and math without assessment. One district, for example, permitted students to earn an associate of arts degree (its basic transfer credential) without completing any courses in math; this was done despite the absence of any bachelors degrees in institutions to which students regularly transferred that could be completed without demonstrating competency in mathematics.

Financial Aid

Financial aid is essential for most minorities who attend urban colleges. Given the statistics on unemployment and poverty among minority youth, it is not surprising that the percentage of students receiving financial assistance closely parallels the proportion of minority students in attendance. Among study colleges serving inner city populations, the percentages on financial aid ranged from 41 to over 85.

The time between admission and actual receipt of financial aid, particularly from federal programs, often is the most difficult period for urban students. Some are unable to pay the costs of required textbooks, others find it difficult even to pay for transportation. In response, many urban colleges have special policies and practices to assist poor students. It was common to provide tuition waivers to those who had applied for financial assistance and who appeared to qualify but had not yet received funds. Less common, but available in several colleges, were bookstore vouchers to permit purchase of textbooks and necessary academic supplies before the arrival of assistance checks. Instructors were also encouraged to avoid giving assignments in required texts until arrangements had been made for students to obtain them. These adjustments while small, were often critical to successful matriculation for the most severely disadvantaged.

Some community college practices designed to help disadvantaged students may ultimately produce undesirable side effects. Permitting students to repeat courses where an initial effort resulted in a low or failing grade keeps them eligible for financial aid and provides the time many require to overcome academic deficiencies. The problem occurs when students transfer after using three of their five years of eligibility while having earned only a year or less of credits applicable to a baccalaureate degree. Institutional policies seem deliberately ambivalent about appropriate objectives for the student who is more than mildly remedial at the time of entry to a community college.

The federal regulations for student progress to remain eligible for financial assistance implemented in January 1984, may do much to resolve some of the ambivalence. Prior to these regulations many community colleges permitted withdrawal from courses without penalty through the 15th week of a 16 week semester. Under the new regulations, students will have to complete with a passing grade at least 75 percent of the courses they attempt to remain eligible. The regulations for student progress are only the most recent of a series of changing requirements for veterans benefits and federal financial aid perceived by the colleges to have adversely affected more than one-fourth of their students. In one inner city college, counselors reported a decline in the proportion of studnets eligible for financial assistance from 77 to 41 over a five year period.

Apart from the obvious impact on enrollments, staff members were not certain the new regulations were detrimental to student or institutional interests. One observed:

> Students used to come in and pick up their checks and go out with no one concerned about whether they were pursuing a particular program or just returning to the streets. Now all that has changed.

Transportability of federal assistance was not an issue in any of the study colleges. Financial aid officers described relationships with four-year institutions as cordial and effective. For state administered financial assistance, the picture was less favorable. Legislatures in several states provided less than full-funding to state plans. In some states, the priority was clearly on reducing differences between the costs of attending independent institutions rather than increasing access for low income students. Problems arose primarily when mid-year transfers did not receive the increase in assistance for which their attendance at a higher cost institution entitled them.

Strategies for Promoting Student Achievement

The problems presented by urban students have evoked a wide range of interventions among inner city colleges. The interventions run the gamut from motivational activities to tightening academic standards. Assessment and the use of exit competencies were under study or in the beginning stages of implementation in most urban districts. Some of the strategies that have assumed increasing importance as urban districts work to improve opportunities for student success are described in the following section.

Motivational Strategies

Community colleges with minority leadership serving predominantly minority populations often placed emphasis on motivational activities. One college described its graduation exercises as an honors convocation. In addition to awarding degrees and certificates, all students who achieved a "B" grade average for the preceding semester were honored, regardless of their previous work. The honors convocation, a major social activity for the college, was well attended by the students and the larger community.

Another district operated two major programs identified with blacks from the community who had achieved national prominence. Some districts treated all students who had earned a specified number of credits with a minimum grade point average as potential transfers or potential graduates. Such students were sent a letter congratulating them on their progress and providing them with information about how they could capitalize on their achievements. One college reported it had doubled the number of students graduating through this approach and another college reported a significant increase in the number of students who transferred. While motivational approaches might appear cosmetic from an external perspective, their frequent use in urban institutions with predominantly minority populations and the effects reported for them, suggest an important potential for improving achievement among minority students. In the early 1960s the Banneker District in St. Louis using similar approaches, achieved considerable success with public school students. The motivational strategies have in common the attempt to raise people's aspirations and this function may be critical for inner city youth.

Affirmative action was also viewed as providing motivation for minority students to succeed. In one district, the chancellor noted that the technical barriers between community colleges and the university were less important than developmental barriers. Student aspirations, socialization patterns, survival orientation, and unwillingness to defer short-term gratification inhibit opportunities for success. By recruiting minority faculty and emphasizing motivation, this district tried to promote the college as a place for discovery of individual talents rather than a supermarket where customers accumulated credits toward a degree. In support of this concept, the chancellor believed it was extremely important for inner city colleges to emphasize athletic programs, social programs, and the cultural arts as well as academic work.

Orientation programs are making a comeback. Many colleges are devoting serious effort to assisting students with program planning in contrast to the efficient strategies for enrolling students in discrete courses which came to be the norm in the growth oriented seventies. Better information about program opportunities early in a student's college career not only improves motivation but in addition reduces the probability of losing credits when transferring.

Academic Strategies

A variety of academic strategies have been tried. Team-taught interdisciplinary courses have been around as long as most urban colleges, but are receiving renewed attention in an effort to provide more coherence to a learning environment often fragmented by the growing numbers of part-time students and faculty. It was common to find reading instruction offered in conjunction with courses in composition as well as on an individual basis. One college offered supplemental reading instruction to students in a political science course. Students were tested after the first week of classes and those judged deficient were given the option of enrolling in a one-credit course in reading using materials that were course relevant. Another college required a foreign language in a newly adopted liberal arts option. Faculty members candidly admitted that one of the important reasons for doing so was to improve the credibility of the college as a place where serious students could find an appropriate challenge.

Several colleges provided special transition courses for students moving from remedial to regular college work. Typically, such courses involved a greater number of contact hours than the credits awarded to permit correction of deficiencies while college credits were concurrently earned. Sometimes reading and composition were taught as part of the same course, but this approach presumed teacher preparation that was not always available. Several urban colleges have developed transition courses in both the physical and the social sciences. In some settings, the developmental instructor and the regular course instructor worked as a team, conferring on content and coordinating the sequence of topics covered.

One of the issues confronted by those who work with underprepared students is finding enough credit hours of work to keep them qualified for financial aid without placing them in courses requiring the basic skills they are enrolled in remedial courses to learn. In one college each of the career program areas had been encouraged to develop at least one course applicable to an associate degree that could be completed successfully with minimal reading and writing skills. In another institution, teachers of remedial courses worked with their colleagues in other disciplines to develop supplemental reading materials that were consistent with the vocabulary level of remedial students. In a college not included in this study, students were no longer admitted with less than a seventh grade reading ability. This decision was made after a study revealed only five individuals in the history of the institution had ever achieved the objectives of the course established to assist this group. Increasingly, limits have been set on the time students are given to correct deficiencies. Those colleges that have studied success rates of remedial students (most of the colleges in this study had not) have generally found students who subsequently succeed in regular programs complete their remedial work in one, or at most, two semesters. The prognosis for any student requiring more time is very dim, at least in part, because state and federal financial aid regulations are geared to provide only this period of eligibility.

Identifying the competencies a course is designed to provide is not a new experience for community colleges. Faculty members in nursing programs have long required assessment of entering and exit competencies to make certain

graduates can pass state licensing examinations. Nursing faculty have been so successful using this approach that graduates of community college programs in many states now outperform the graduates of baccalaureate institutions on the same state examination. One district applied the experience gained with nursing classes to all vocational offerings. Course competencies were then aggregated into program competencies and prospective employers were given a description of the range of tasks a program graduate was qualified to perform.

Developing entrance and exit competencies has proven more controversial for transfer offerings than for vocational programs. One district that used an examination to measure exit competencies for graduates of college parallel programs during the early sixties had dropped it during the movement toward mass access. Replacing the exam were syllabi which faculty signed to indicate that their procedures for instruction and evaluation were designed to accomplish stated and measurable objectives. But there was no external check on outcomes. Because of the extreme disparities among students completing the same courses in different colleges of this district, consideration was being given to reinitiating the exam or finding a suitable alternative.

While testing for exit competencies in transfer courses was a practice in only one of the colleges participating in the study, the possibility of such tests was under consideration by faculty committees in several additional districts. One of the factors influencing discussions was the growing tendency for four-year colleges and universities to administer their own validation examinations or, alternatively, to hold credit in escrow until a transfer student completed the following course in a sequence. Community college administrators are beginning to see the handwriting on the wall. If community colleges do not test for exit competencies their students will be tested by the upper division institutions to which they transfer. On the horizon for several states was the so-called "rising junior" examination already required in Florida and Georgia and administered to all students, both community college transfers and university natives, as a prerequisite to junior standing.

The impetus for improved assessment of entry and exit competencies was by no means a function of external pressures or influences from the faculty alone. The dean of one urban college noted, "If you let people walk in off the street and enroll in class, you are hopelessly lost because you give teachers an insurmountable task." When confronted with such a task, faculty members must choose between reducing standards or increasing attrition rates. Neither of these alternative is acceptable and so the search continues for strategies that offer some chance of improving student success without violating the community college commitment to open access.

Standards for student progress help to tie together the academic strategies. Colleges increasingly give attention to finding out why students attend and whether they are making satisfactory progress. As previously noted, federal financial regulations have given major impetus to this movement. Still the policies of most districts remained fairly minimal. A typical district required a minimum grade point average of 1.5 (on a 4 point scale) by the time a student had completed 12 credit hours while concurrently moving the date for withdrawal from a course without penalty from the end of the 14th week of the semester to the end of the 10th week. Course completion requirements were those required by federal policy.

Complicating efforts to enforce standards of progress was the nearly uniform absence of effective student tracking systems. Despite these handicaps there has been some progress. Several districts required periodic academic audits of students receiving financial aid. Overall there was recognition of the need for better student guidance and more rigorous academic standards. One black president summed it up very well, "Professionally, we must map the paths and give no quarter in terms of the standards we require; we must be very clear about expected outcomes."

Academic Support Strategies

Community colleges placed considerable emphasis on academic support services in addition to the motivational and learning strategies already described. The learning laboratory was the most emphasized intervention. Within learning laboratories can be found most of the support services that have proven themselves over the past decade. Learning laboratories perform initial diagnoses of student deficiencies and prescribe learning modules or tutorial services as required. They administer mastery exams and preserve records of student progress. Many labs have faculty assigned to provide special assistance and individual attention. Within the learning labs, heavy emphasis was frequently placed on technological solutions to learning problems. In particular, use of such computer-assisted instructional programs as PLATO has been very popular. Almost without exception, the material is of high quality and demonstrated effectiveness when used by a student. Technological solutions are favored by administrators over such labor intensive interventions as tutorial services and individualized faculty assistance because of perceived efficiency. Technological solutions have the important advantage of being available when people are not. Unfortunately, the experience of inner city colleges seems to show that underprepared students prefer human interventions because of their need for support as well as for role models. Technological solutions require self-motivated and self-directed learners, a description that does not apply to most students attending inner city institutions.

One alternative to the centralized learning laboratory, favored by faculty was separate learning labs operated by academic departments having responsibility for remediation. While not as space and personnel efficient as the centralized learning laboratory, discipline related laboratories have the advantage of emphasizing the relationship between the exercises provided and the skills necessary to succeed in advanced courses offered by the same department.

Regardless of whether learning laboratories were centralized or discipline affiliated, the most important service they provided was tutoring. Tutors were professionals, para-professionals, or peers. The most successful colleges using peer tutors provided a professional person who trained, organized and evaluated them. In some institutions tutors were assigned directly to classes to assure they came into regular contact with prospective clients. Attending class had the additional advantage of familiarizing tutors with course content and instructor expectations. Alternatively, tutors were assigned to a centralized learning laboratory where they served students on a

walk-in basis. Among the advantages cited for this arrangement were ease of administration and use of time in tutoring that would otherwise have been spent in attending class. The greatest disadvantage involved the difficulty of getting students most in need of tutorial services to take advantage of them. It appears that with educational as well as social services, those who need them the least are most likely to take advantage of them. One college dealt with this problem by sending out letters to students in high risk groups encouraging the use of tutorial services and implying that eligibility for financial aid might be threatened if the student did not take advantage of them. As might be expected, faculty preferred the arrangement where tutors were assigned directly to a class.

One college that limited tutorial services did so in part because the source of funding was a small categorical state grant that limited participants to those who were vocationally oriented and disadvantaged. This state policy clearly emphasized vocational education at the expense of the transfer program. When asked why the college did not use its own resources to make tutorial services more widely available, the answer of the person responsible for the services was, "Students don't request such services." When it was observed that a sister college in the same district that attracted more capable students made heavy use of tutorial services, the instructor suggested the difference should be attributed to the socio-economic background of the students. This particular combination of state influence and staff attitude seemed to suggest a limited view of the capabilities of the student population served.

Conclusion

The contents of this chapter provide few surprises to those who are knowledgeable about urban community colleges. Such institutions serve students who are disadvantaged educationally and economically. The task they have taken on is monumental but they persist. And grudgingly, the problem gives way around the edges because of a combination of human and technological interventions. Progress has been modest and set-backs frequent. Still, the high level of commitment of urban community colleges to the clientele they serve, along with their willingness to commit institutional resources to special support programs when state categorical grants are reduced or foundation funds expire, make them a critical actor in any attempt to reduce discrepancies between the educational achievement of minorities and non-minorities. And despite failures, education remains the nations most promising strategy for coping with the long-term consequences of racial discrimination and poverty.

Urban community colleges can be criticized for compromising standards, emphasizing a social welfare rather than educational mission, over-emphasizing technological solutions, and coming perilously close to confirming the criticisms of those who allege they constitute a class-based tracking system. But they must be commended for their belief in the basic dignity of all human beings, their increasing sophistication in diagnosing and dealing with a broad array of learning problems, their willingness to put their resources where their philosophy takes them and their success in recruiting a large percentage

of all the minority faculty members and administrative leadership currently involved in Mainland U.S. higher education.

Beyond these obvious contributions to helping minority students succeed, there are hopeful signs on the horizon pointing to future progress, albeit of an evolutionary nature. Among the most promising signs is the tendency to rely more on institutional research in revising policy and less on philosophy. As an example, one district studied the outcomes for three groups in determining whether to make course placement mandatory on the basis of reading test scores. One was left to do as they pleased, a second enrolled in existing developmental courses, and a third was required to enroll in a program especially tailored to their assessed competencies. Not surprisingly, all of the first group were gone by the end of the first semester. The second group did better, but not nearly as well as the third. This district now assesses all entering students and mandates placement on the basis of the results.

In another study conducted in the same district, information gathered on a math course with an extremely high failure rate indicated that students who experienced problems entered the course from a prerequisite remedial course while those entering by way of the placement exam performed well. When this information was made available to the math department, the problem was soon resolved. Besides using institutional research to identify and resolve problems of student learning there appears to be a growing awareness of the need to improve the available data base and to rely more heavily on information in decision-making.

The use of an improved information base in decision making holds the hope of a better understanding of the issues that currently separate community colleges and universities in their efforts to provide effective educational services to an urban clientele. Understanding each other's cultures is a prerequisite to improving opportunities for students to attain baccalaureate degrees. The outcome of such understanding need not produce a common culture, as each institution has its distinctive niche in the scheme of urban education. It should, however, produce greater respect for necessary differences in institutional approaches along with strategies for helping students cope with these differences.

CHAPTER 6

URBAN UNIVERSITIES

Most four-year institutions participating in this study could be characterized as emerging or aspiring research universities. They value primarily scholarship rather than teaching or service. While established originally to serve residents of their urban settings, the aspirations of their administrators and faculty lead naturally to priorities focused on national recognition and improved status within their respective state university systems. The conflicting demands of urban settings and national aspirations produces dynamic tension that inhibits the intensity with which either set of objectives can be pursued. Beyond the conflicting demands of setting and aspirations, there are additional complications arising from system governing/coordinating board constraints and pressures from state political leadership.

The pursuit of research status in the midst of cities experiencing a wide array of social problems forces difficult choices between programs and services designed to improve opportunities for city residents and those designed to attract and retain distinguished scholars for whom urban location may mean little more than convenience. The choice between a teaching oriented minority candidate willing to devote time to serving as a role model for minority students and a non-minority candidate with stronger research qualifications exemplifies the problem which continues through the tenure decision and beyond. Complicating the choice process is the widely held perception that urban universities are not competitive in recruiting qualified minority scholars because of their higher teaching loads in comparison with established research universities.

Despite conflicting objectives and difficult choices, urban universities perform their missions at levels that generally exceed the public expectations against which they are judged. They enroll the highest proportions of minority students of any institutions in their respective systems and, even though most have few minorities on their administrative staffs or faculty, many have intervention strategies of demonstrated effectiveness operating to help minority students succeed. Ironically, urban universities take little credit for such programs because they are not activities through which research universities typically improve their status. Where urban universities receive criticism from state levels, and most do not, the criticism typically focuses on completion rates and representation in such professional programs as engineering and medicine.

The relative absence of criticism is partly a function of the very limited data that has been available on the success rates for their students. Only recently with the emerging concern about exploitation of athletes has there been much effort to examine educational outcomes for students in urban universities disaggregated by race or other attributes of interest. One of the reasons that urban universities have been slow to develop and publish statistics about student completion rates, has been the prevailing practice of computing these rates over the same 4 or 5 year periods typically used for

full-time students in residential universities. Such time periods are highly inappropriate, if not totally irrelevant, for the urban commuter institution.

In this chapter, we expand our previous discussion on urban university culture to examine in detail practices related to the educational program and support services. In the course of this analysis, we shall highlight some of the disjunctures between university practices and those within community colleges where most minority students begin their postsecondary educational careers. We do this to set the stage for a discussion of articulation which appears in the following chapter. Rather than attempting to be comprehensive in coverage, the focus has been placed on programs and services of particularly importance to the achievement of minority students.

Educational Priorities and Practices

The universities in this study are products of the expansion of educational opportunities that occurred in the 1960s. Even those that predated this era underwent significant change moving from two-year to four-year status, changing from independent to public institutions, or in one case, becoming by public referendum, a university. Their master plans conceived in the heady environment of higher education's "golden era", projected more students, more buildings and more educational programs, particularly at the graduate level, than most have been able to achieve. The role of demographics and fiscal realities is undeniable in this frustration of ambitions, but also important has been the competition and political influence of less urban sister institutions who often have done all in their power to prevent the development of programs that might compete for students.

As one result, urban universities believe they need to offer additional programs. This is as true of the comprehensive institutions as the research universities. And it seems to apply to universities that have followed relatively normal development patterns as well as those where program development has been curtailed by fiscal constraints and/or system competition. There are also the normal problems of faculty imbalance. Colleges of liberal arts and sciences have fewer students and more faculty than they need while the opposite applies to such professional areas as business and engineering. Available resources and student demand have significantly impacted admissions standards and faculty interests in retention among the colleges that comprise each of these universities.

The problem of improving baccalaureate achievement by minorities appeared to be primarily a problem of retention. Given the limited remedial offerings and support staff available for underprepared students already enrolled, it was difficult to see how the admission of additional underprepared students would improve the situation. None of the universities were turning away qualified minority students, however, the retention of students was not a priority for most of them. In one the chair of the faculty retention committee indicated she had not called the committee together in more than a year because there seemed to be little reason in view of the outcome of past meetings. A dean of an arts and science college described his largely unsuccessful efforts to change faculty attitudes that students should "fish or

cut bait". In contrast, a dean of a comprehensive university reported offering an increased number of remedial sections and reduced class size.

The Problem of Under Preparation

In general, university faculty were less likely to be optimistic about their ability to work effectively with underprepared students than their community college counterparts. One administrator, recently employed at a comprehensive university after serving in a community college for several years, attributed this difference to the background in high school teaching of many community college faculty and their experience in working with a wider range of student abilities. From conversations with administrators, it was clear that faculty attitudes, particularly with respect to retention, represented a key variable in the success equation for minority students.

Administrators in research universities did not talk about changing faculty behaviors except in relation to their tightening standards for scholarships as this influenced personnel decisions. In contrast, many administrators in comprehensive universities, much like their counterparts in community colleges, were optimistic about their ability to encourage faculty to become more sensitive to the needs of students in general and of minority students in particular. One comprehensive university in a relatively brief time span had changed from serving a predominantly white population to a predominantly minority population. The racial composition of administrators, as might be expected, had changed much more rapidly than the racial composition of faculty. White administrators expressed pessimism about the probability of changing the behavior of a predominantly white faculty, but minority administrators were convinced the necessary changes would occur.

The single most effective strategy for producing changes in faculty attitudes toward minority students may well be the recruitment of minority faculty members. In one interview, the tone of a discussion was dramatically altered by the arrival of a black faculty member at a meeting of an otherwise caucasian department. Not only did the minority member offer important insights, but her presence elicited from her colleagues a much greater sensitivity to the issues of working with minority students than they had demonstrated prior to her arrival.

Teaching of Writing Skills

Three levels of entry into the writing sequence were found in most of the universities studied. The first level involved the more or less standard two-course sequence traditionally found as part of the general education requirement. Below the standard sequence, a writing proficiency course was offered without degree credit from which students exited only after passing a competency examination. A third level involved a two-course sequence intended to prepare students needing more assistance than provided by the one-course remedial sequence for the entrance exam for the standard composition sequence. The use of competency exams to assess students exiting from remedial courses or the standard composition sequence was common. Two universities, one by state mandate and the other by action of its faculty senate, had recently

initiated a standard examination taken by native students as well as community college transfers before they received junior status. The motivation for adopting the requirement was at least twofold. University faculty, as previously noted, were suspicious of the standards enforced in community colleges but they were also concerned about the absence of writing requirements in their own upper division courses amidst reports that their graduates lacked writing skills.

One research university had received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to design a three-course writing sequence by involving teachers from high schools and adjacent community colleges with university faculty. The dean responsible for the program believed the way to overcome suspicion about differences in standards and misunderstandings about the kinds of problems faced at the different levels of education was to get faculty from the levels involved in teaching together. He observed, "Talking is not enough to alter the tendency faculty have for putting the blame for poor performance one level back." Interestingly, full-time faculty members in the English department of this university seemed to exhibit little enthusiasm for the project, perhaps because none were involved in teaching courses other than literature.

In the research universities, few, if any, writing courses were taught by full-time faculty. Instead, graduate students and part-time faculty, sometimes recruited from adjacent community colleges, taught them. At least two universities maintained a permanent cadre of lecturers, ineligible for tenure, to teach writing. Several offered graduate programs in teaching composition and rhetoric and the graduate students from these programs served as the reservoir of needed talent for writing courses.

Perhaps the most interesting arrangement for handling remedial classes in writing involved a university which contracted with an adjacent community college to offer the classes in university facilities taught by community college faculty. The community college claimed the student credit hours generated for state reimbursement while the university was also able to count the students as part of its enrollment since they were concurrently enrolled in other university courses. Most ingenious of all was the formal creation of a consortium between the university and the community college, permitting students with concurrent registration in both institutions to retain eligibility for financial aid.

In comprehensive universities where full-time faculty typically teach writing courses, teaching loads were lighter than in community colleges. Where faculty members taught composition exclusively, as occurred in predominantly minority institutions where the remedial load was unusually heavy, the maximum number of credit hours taught was 9 in contrast with the 15 found in many community colleges. While community college faculty not infrequently teach composition classes in universities, the reverse is much less likely to occur, partly because research universities usually have restrictions against moonlighting by their faculty.

There was a sense among research university English faculty that minority students were not well served in their institutions, but there seemed to be little understanding of why this was the case. Nor did there seem to be much interest in exploring how the situation might be improved. It was clear that

few minority students majored in English and that English faculties numbered few minorities among their membership.

Mathematics

Many of the students who enter urban universities are poorly prepared in mathematics. The least selective comprehensive universities offered as many as five or six courses at pre-calculus levels. Some were as basic as "fundamental operations on whole numbers, decimals, and fractions." Others permitted "students in undergraduate programs which do not require a specific sequence in mathematics" to meet general education requirements with limited proficiency, although such students were still required to pass a mathematics examination. At the minimum, this examination could be passed by students having the equivalent of one year of high school algebra.

Less selective research universities typically offered two to four pre-calculus courses generally paralleling high school algebra, geometry and trigonometry. More selective research universities offered one or two courses designed to cover the same high school content areas but in less time than their less selective counterparts. In research universities, pre-calculus courses were not accepted as a part of the degree programs of the high demand majors including business, engineering and architecture.

Beyond the sequence designed to prepare students for calculus, math departments provided special courses for students in social sciences and the other fields where advanced mathematical competencies were not required. But increasingly, the high demand fields emphasized mathematics as an admissions requirement. This emphasis which sometimes exceeded the apparent need for mathematics in courses required by the major, seemed to reflect the confidence of university faculty in mathematics as an unchanging standard in an environment where there is constant pressure to adapt to students as they are rather than to require them to become what faculty believe they ought to be.

Mathematics clearly served a gatekeeper function for business, a major where student interest encouraged faculty to become as selective as their universities would tolerate. The explanation provided by faculty was that studies in business administration were becoming increasingly quantitative. While this assertion was undoubtedly accurate, in the same institution where it was given, the business degree could also be earned by substituting a foreign language for the required math sequence.

It is difficult to criticize faculty for using mathematics as a screening tool, especially since quantitative concepts are involved in many advanced courses in high demand areas and the preparation of students being admitted is often meager. In one comprehensive university serving a predominantly minority population, only one-half of the entering students were able to pass the competency examination which measured the equivalent of 8th grade arithmetic. Twenty percent of those entering had the equivalent of one year of high school algebra or more. Even in the research universities, the number of students requiring some form of remediation in mathematics at entrance sometimes exceeded 50 percent.

The prognosis for those who enter remedial courses is not good, and the further behind they enter in the sequence, the more problematic it becomes. Attrition figures for entry level mathematics courses ranged from 35 to 60 percent. The figures for minorities in the same courses in one university ranged from 15 to 25 percent higher than the class average. These figures did not apply to Asian students who regularly out-perform everyone, including non-minorities, in mathematics and the sciences. As one faculty member said, "Every mathematics professor dreams of a classroom full of Chinese."

Even those who do well are not guaranteed success in the advanced courses. Faculty members from mathematics departments explained the poor performance in advanced courses of students coming out of their remedial sequence with the observation: "Student success in mathematics requires repeated exposures over time. You can't cram the amount of information in these courses and expect students to retain enough to do them any good."

Like their colleagues in English departments, full-time faculty members in math separate themselves from remedial work. This generalization does not apply to comprehensive universities where, as previously noted, as many as 80 percent of the entering students require some form of remedial assistance. In research universities, however, remedial courses were taught by part-time faculty, graduate students, or lecturers with non-tenure track appointments. While the mathematics departments retained an oversight function, their involvement was as limited as possible.

Given the diversity among entering students and the competencies they present, these universities would seem to be an ideal setting for self-paced learning. Indeed, many did use self-pacing for entry level courses, but this seemed more a way of managing large numbers than a strategy for promoting student success. In one comprehensive university where tutors had been withdrawn from self-paced classrooms as an economy measure, faculty members responded by placing more emphasis on lecture, discussion and individual assistance from faculty members. The increased structure and restrictions on the number of times students could repeat examinations increased the success ratios. This experience was reported in other settings as well; suggesting that self-paced learning has limited value for underprepared students in mathematics for some of the same reasons that technology fails in community colleges. Seriously underprepared students from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds require structure and human support. Providing these does not guarantee success, but it does improve the probabilities.

University math faculty members displayed a curious ambivalence in their attitudes towards working with underprepared students. On the one hand, they stated such students should go to community colleges; in the same interviews, they suggested that students coming directly to the university received a better preparation than those beginning in community colleges. Their ambivalence was also reflected in policies for working with transfer students. Despite articulation agreements and the absence of any statistical evidence favoring the performance of native students over community college transfers, courses below the level of calculus were not recognized in university placement procedures. All students entering as transfers who had not completed calculus were required to take a placement examination and placed according to the examination rather than on the basis of courses completed at the community college.

It was difficult to escape the conclusion that blacks and Hispanics were being systematically channeled into soft majors because of their mathematics backgrounds. Mathematics faculty members reported that these minorities did not do well in math courses either as transfers or as freshmen. Faculty also reported fewer minority students in remedial courses, partly reflecting new admissions standards which have reduced the number of minorities being admitted.

Improving math skills among minority students emerged as one of the most important strategies for improving the number of baccalaureate graduates. But it was difficult to see how this could be accomplished without reforming the elementary and secondary school programs through which students entered. None of the universities were very optimistic about the effectiveness of remedial education in compensating for poor preparation in the public schools. One group of mathematics faculty hypothesized that the poor math background of minorities begins by a sterotyping in the early elementary grades. They observed that the time spent on arithmetic skills was much less in the predominantly minority schools than in the majority schools. One faculty member observed:

> By the time they get to the middle school, they have been conditioned to avoid math and science courses in favor of the social sciences. Guidance counselors then counsel them to vocational courses or to the general education rather than the college preparatory tracks. By the time of high school most blacks are convinced they cannot handle math.

Choice of Majors by Community College Transfers

Most transfers enter urban universities from community colleges in fields such as human service, social service, speech and the administration of justice. The percentage of minorities is highest in colleges of arts and sciences. Of course, many are there because they have been denied admission to the program of their choice. Despite the fact that transfers constitute more than half of the student population of most arts and science colleges, native freshmen continue to receive most of the attention.

A major challenge for arts and science colleges is how to advise students who want to be in another college. One strategy tried without much success was to encourage all students to meet degree requirements for the college. The vestibule function of arts and science colleges was as problematic for students as it was for faculty members. One dean described his experience when funding restrictions caused the university to place a limit on liberal arts enrollment for one year. The students commented, "You mean we can't even get into liberal arts."

Colleges of Business and Engineering

The practices in over subscribed colleges like business and engineering contrast sharply with those in arts and sciences. In one university, all

transfer students were expected to complete a pre-business sequence before being considered for admission to the college of business. The sequence required passing four courses in the major with a minimum grade point average of 2.25.

Despite more restrictive admission policies then arts and science colleges, business colleges reported a relatively high ratio of minorities to non-minorities and numbered among their majors more transfer students than natives. Business college administrators with the best access to performance data reported that the problems of success for transfer minority students were no different than those for native minority students. One associate dean noted that it did not make a lot of difference where students did their lower division work, except in the area of accounting; he added, "Our faculty have set high standards and require a lot from students."

Engineering schools have more facts and figures about their students then most other colleges. They were also more likely to have independent programs aimed at recruiting minorities. Such programs operated both at national and regional levels. The leadership shown in this area by colleges of engineering seemed related in part to the extremely small number of minorities enrolled in their programs. In universities where the overall enrollment of blacks and Hispanics ranged from 10 percent to 15 percent, the percentage enrolled in engineering was two to six.

Transfer students also were under represented. In one university where transfer students accounted for more then 60 percent of the university enrollment, they represented only 23 percent of the enrollment in the engineering school. One reason most engineering schools do not recruit transfer students is the view that for engineering, you win or lose the recruiting battle for students in junior high school.

Despite the relative absence of recruiting programs aimed at community colleges, even the more selective engineering schools enrolled transfers from a wide range of community colleges including inner city institutions that did not offer engineering transfer programs and served predominately minority student populations.

Summer programs for high school students emphasizing skill development and motivation were a common approach to the recruitment of minority students. Yet, urban universities were not necessarily the beneficiaries of these recruiting efforts. One dean who had considerable experience with summer programs commented, "Any student who qualifies for our college as a result of a summer program also qualifies for other programs that offer more status and where there are residence halls." Nevertheless, the effort was judged worthwhile as four students in their next graduating class were products of this program.

One imaginative effort to improve recruiting from inner city community colleges involved a cooperative program through which minority students expressing an interest in engineering were given special opportunities for enrichment and assistance and guaranteed three opportunities to be considered for admission, each time in a preferred status if program requirements were met. In general, where universities have developed programs with community colleges, the results have been very satisfactory. One dean noted that all of

the minorities who persisted in his program after a year were either transfers or had come through the university's own special program.

Cooperative programs between community colleges and universities seemed to be the exception rather than the rule however. Where they did exist, it was unusual to find them focused on inner city clientele. One university with an inner city location had offered to teach special advanced level engineering courses for community college students in the neighboring suburbs. When asked why such courses were not taught in the city the response was, "The numbers aren't there."

Student Services

Research universities typically did not offer the extensive support services found in community colleges and to a lesser extent in comprehensive universities, especially those serving a predominantly minority student body. Within research universities there was much less evidence of concern about minority or underprepared students. Most were committed to accepting losses in enrollment as the preferred alternative to accepting students who did not meet appropriate admissions criteria.

Within research universities academic support services such as tutoring, remedial courses, and skills laboratories were usually linked to student affairs rather than to the educational program. Regardless of where the services reported, there appeared to be little concern about integrating activities; as one result, efforts to serve minority students seemed excessively fragmented.

Because of the importance of well qualified students to the attainment of university priorities and a well defined faculty preference for recent high school graduates, the efforts of admissions staff members were oriented toward the suburbs rather than the inner city. Despite the importance of urban community colleges as a source of students for these universities, improving coordination of programs or services emerged as a priority in only two cities and there it was a function of the personalities of key administrators more than a planned activity.

Comprehensive universities located in urban centers followed practices that were similar to community colleges rather than to research universities. They differed primarily in placing greater emphasis on exit competencies and in being less flexible in adapting practices to the behavior patterns of their students. Neither comprehensive universities nor research universities produced well articulated philosophies about the needs of urban minorities or how these could best be met. The one exception was the minority president of a comprehensive university who defined a philosophical position which he carefully linked to a comprehensive program of services provided by the university.

In the remainder of this section of the chapter, we identify practices in common use among study institutions in the areas of admissions, recruitment, orientation, assessment and placement, and financial assistance. Under each topic, emphasis has been given to the impact on underprepared and minority

students, and the approaches are compared with those prevalent in community colleges. The chapter concludes with a discussion of strategies for improving opportunities for minority students reported by university staff.

Admissions

Admission requirements had been stiffened in all of the universities participating in the study. The rationale for increasing requirements as stated by one university vice president, underscores a value issue separating community colleges and universities:

> We were in a dangerous situation in terms of the students we admitted; ACT scores were below national averages. We were spending money on support systems without evident returns and student quality had begun to affect what was happening in the classrooms.

Institutions were well aware of the effect of increased admissions standards on minority enrollments. When one group of faculty was asked how they would preserve access while improving quality, the response of the department chair was, "That's like cutting the deficit without raising taxes."

Most universities did not expect their enrollments to decline overall as a result of increased admissions standards . At the same time, there was little tendency to back away from increased requirements even where actual declines had taken place. Faculty members and administrators stressed their readiness to accept declining enrollments if necessary to avoid reducing quality. The preferred strategy, however, was to offset declines in undergraduate enrollments by increasing the number of graduate students.

In contrast to the stated strategy of increasing graduate enrollments, urban administrators actually compensated for the steady erosion in students entering directly from high school by admitting more transfer students. Universities accepted transfers from community colleges who would not have been admissible on the basis of high school performance or test scores. Such students typically needed only 9 to 18 hours of credit and a grade point average of 2.0. Because there were no distribution requirements, non-admissable high school graduates were able to enroll in the least demanding courses they could identify at the community college while meeting the requirements for university admission.

Even with high school graduates, most universities required only modest admission standards. One required students to rank in the upper two-thirds of the high school graduating class and to present an acceptable test score. Another university by law was required to admit all graduates of state high schools completing a college preparatory curriculum. Both of these universities had extensive remedial programs and perceived themselves as competing with community colleges for the same students, a perception shared by the community college administrators in their respective cities.

Universities followed a two stage process in admitting transfers. In the first students were notified by the admissions office of their acceptance and of the number of credits they had earned at the community college for which

they would receive credit at the university. The admissions letter also advised them that acceptance to the program of choice and the evaluation of transfer credits applicable to a degree program would be determined by the school or college responsible for the program. Thus students received two separate and sometimes conflicting communications about the status of the work they had completed before transferring.

At the college or department level, admission practices varied in relation to student enrollment pressures. In high demand areas, the admissions process took longer and frequently resulted in fewer credits accepted as meeting the requirements for a degree. Routinely, students found themselves with more elective credits than required and fewer credits in the major than anticipated. In several universities, those knowledgeable about the transcript evaluation process reported that regardless of the number of hours earned before transferring, the typical matriculant who had completed two years in a community college would require an additional three years to earn the baccalaureate degree.

Recruiting

The emphasis in university recruiting remains on the recent high school graduate, but the reality of matriculation demographics moves the university toward the transfer student and the part-time adult. Universities with predominantly non-minority student populations did not seem to recruit minority students as a priority as evidenced by the absence of targeted institutional financial assistance and the practices of admissions staff who reported concentrating most of their efforts on high schools and community colleges in the surrounding suburbs. An admissions officer from one university noted that presidential scholarships rarely went to black students. The officer observed:

> Before busing, some of the scholarships were distributed geographically and went to blacks. Since the advent of busing, however, almost all of them go to white students.

Inner city public schools received very little attention from university recruiters except for contacts from those representing special programs for minorities. One university that had previously held special registrations on an inner city community college campus discontinued the practice. The reason given was that the effort seldom resulted in many students being admitted. This generally negative assessment of recruiting efforts aimed at minorities needs to be qualified by the note that all universities made an effort to include minorities on their admission staffs. Typically, each university had at least one minority staff member who maintained linkages with schools viewed as sources of minority students.

University officials were quite candid about their reasons for not placing more emphasis on the recruitment of minorities. First, the universities already enrolled the highest proportions of minority students of any in their respective university systems; thus, there was little external pressure for increasing numbers. Second, most policy-level administrators in these universities were quite pessimistic about their ability to recruit well

qualified minority students. One admissions officer summed it up:

> We don't stand a chance of getting really able black students; those who are able are recruited heavily by schools with more money and more status.

Finally, many in the universities questioned the wisdom of expending scarce resources on support programs that did not improve success for any significant percentage of the students enrolled. In addition, there was the concern that emphasis on these programs might contribute to status and image problems within their respective systems.

Contributing to the reluctance to emphasize minorities in recruitment efforts was the perception that the products of their city public school systems were uniformly poor. One administrator noted that the superintendent of schools had written off the current crop of students as unsalvageable. Another university administrator observed that the public schools were so politicized and under staffed as to be little more than custodial agencies. Perceptions of inner city community college products were little better. The prevailing judgment seemed to be that research universities could not achieve their objectives by recruiting minority students from city public school systems or urban community college districts. One administrator noted, "The numbers of quality minority students just aren't there."

As previously noted, exceptions to the lack of emphasis on the recruitment of minorities were found in schools of engineering and less frequently among colleges of business. Every urban university with a school of engineering in the study also had an identifiable program aimed at attracting qualified minorities and providing them with special scholarship assistance. Such programs most commonly relied on external support from private corporations. Despite such programs, very few minority students graduated from engineering.

Orientation

Orientation practices ran the gamut from a one-hour standard slide presentation of university services to an elaborate two-day program complete with social activities and small group sessions focused on strategies for adjusting to university life and succeeding in studies. The most elaborate program was offered by a comprehensive university serving a predominately minority student body. Provisions were made in all universities for student advising but the quality was far from uniform.

In one university, an administrator explained why their advising system received poor grades by noting many of their students came from community colleges with a student development emphasis while their own faculty was not student centered. Later in the same conversation, she expanded on her point; "The faculty here believe there are too many students and they don't have the time to advise them. For some faculty, advising means putting out a supply of stamped forms in front of their office door."

In a different situation, a minority staff member responsible for a student advising program described a reoccurring scene at the Faculty Senate meeting:

> Whenever someone points out that advising isn't very good at this university, some faculty member always observes the advising isn't very good because faculty aren't paid to do it. At this point, the President becomes angry and lectures those present that faculty are expected to teach and advise; but the faculty are never persuaded.

Three universities held special orientation programs for minority students that were planned and supervised by minority staff members responsible for special support programs. Students attending had to meet special eligibility requirements because of the use of categorical funds. Two universities offered orientation sessions for transfer students which covered standard topics including student services, campus life and university requirements. Getting minority and transfer students to attend special sessions was a challenge. One university that combined orientation for transfer students with early registration for courses reported that 15 percent of those eligible participated. The comprehensive university that seemed to work the hardest at encouraging minority students to attend attracted only about a third of the eligible pool. The tendency for transfers and minorities to make late decisions about attending contributed heavily to the problem.

As was true of admissions, freshman students received the most attention, transfers into the day program were next, with evening students receiving the least. In talking about advisement, one faculty member noted, "There is an office which advises evening students and other unusual students." Later, it became clear that the category of unusual students included transfers. Another faculty member in the group noted advising for freshmen was more systematic and better organized than for transfers; "Transfer students drift in and are welcomed with open arms, but not helped at all." Another faculty member added, "Most of our majors are transfers, but they are not minorities or community college transfers."

The basic assumption undergirding orientation activities was that students had defined educational objectives and only needed assistance in selecting courses to achieve those objectives. While the quality of advising as assessed by the institutions themselves ranged from poor to no better than adequate, it was apparent a student who sought out advising services would find them. It was not as apparent that efforts were made to insure transfer students learned about the importance of advising or were given special encouragement to take advantage of advising, with the exception of the two universities that had recently initiated special programs. There is a curious paradox in the fact that urban universities depend heavily upon community college transfers but give them very limited attention or special assistance.

Assessment and Placement

Urban universities experienced many of the same problems as community colleges because of their modest admission requirements and the overlap in clientele. Students arrived late and had to be placed in classes without

completing prescribed assessment procedures. The influx of underprepared students in the least selective institutions placed pressure on faculty to adapt course requirements to avoid excessive attrition. As in community colleges, students were prevented from enrolling in math, English, chemistry and computer science unless they completed the assessment process. They were permitted to enroll in other courses where they lacked prerequisite skills. The practice of permitting underprepared students to enroll in regular university courses without the supportive services for avoiding failures present in community colleges, did much to explain the high attrition figures for minority students who entered as native freshman.

Placement examinations were routinely administered in reading, writing and mathematics to all freshman. In some institutions, study skills and career interests were also assessed. Transfer students were tested in reading and writing if they had not completed the English composition sequence. Several universities had either placed one course in the composition sequence at the junior level or were planning to do so as a strategy for ensuring that no community college transfer would complete requirements for a university degree without undergoing an assessment of writing skills by university personnel.

Transfer students were tested in mathematics if they had not completed a course in calculus and were then placed without regard to math courses taken at the community college. One faculty member explained the practice; "Transfer course descriptions sound fine in the catalogue, but when we get people here, they just don't know the materials." From the perspective of university faculty members, transfer students presented at least as much of an assessment problem as entering freshmen.

Faculty members in such popular majors as engineering, business and allied health had developed additional safeguards against admitting underprepared transfer students. Departments within these fields administered validation examinations for coursework completed at the community college or held credit in escrow until a subsequent course in a sequence was completed satisfactorily. In several universities, transfer students were admitted as arts and science majors and required to complete a minimum of 12 credits in specified courses before learning whether they were acceptable to the program of their choice. While this approach was not significantly different from the one followed by community colleges in admitting students to their own selective allied health programs, the impact was to encourage early transfer, a practice that has been found in many settings to be detrimental to student persistence.

Comprehensive universities in general, and those serving predominantly minority student bodies in particular, differed from research universities in their approach to enrolling students as would be expected from the previous discussion of their greater orientation to the social problems of the areas they served. Comprehensive universities like research institutions were pulled toward increasing standards and achieving the marks of respectability conferred by specialized accreditation in areas such as business and nursing. At the same time, they identified with their students and were committed to maintaining what one dean described as "a concerned and loving environment." Their emphasis upon the use of examinations to validate competencies reflected the philosophy expressed by one administrator, "I'm not interested in who comes in; I'm interested in the competencies of those that exit." Motivation

as a variable contributing to student success received the same attention in universities with minority leadership as it did in community colleges serving similar populations. Research universities in contrast marched to a different drummer. They expected students to be independent and self-directed. The absence of concern and special assistance, as well as the relative absence of minority staff in research universities, appeared to account for student perceptions of a cold and hostile environment.

Financial Assistance

The level of communication between university financial aid officers and those in community colleges was described as good but seemed to occur more as a function of attendance at professional meetings than because of any planned efforts to exchange information. One financial aid director noted there had been considerable communication with nearby community college financial aid officers in past years but now such communication "is no longer a priority."

Procedures for verifying eligibility and monitoring student progress were uniformly rigorous among universities. Even with rigorous validation procedures and restrictive policies on use of university funds for those whose eligibility was in doubt, evidence suggested that few students experienced problems obtaining financial assistance. One financial aid director estimated that out of 1,000 students processed during walk-through registration, only about 25 could not be helped. These figures, of course, did not consider students who might have stayed away because of concerns that the university would not be able to help them.

Most public universities administered very little of their own financial assistance. The exceptions were universities concerned about increasing the number of qualified minority students either because of strong commitment from institutional leaders, or because of the requirements of a state desegregation plan. The percentage of students receiving financial aid ranged from 22 percent in a predominantly white university located in an area away from center-city not well served by public transportation, to more than 85 percent in a predominantly black university serving an inner city population. As with community colleges, the percentage of students receiving financial aid was highly correlated with the percentage of minority students in attendance.

Work study was an important component of most financial aid programs. A research university with an advantageous location in a suburban area between two major cities reported placing 9,000 students or almost half of its total enrollment each year with many of the jobs provided by employers other than the university itself. This university expected students on financial aid to earn a minimum of 50 percent of their entitlement.

An inner city university located in the heart of a black residential area was heavily dependent on student work study funds. Of the 1000 students eligible for the program and willing to participate, only 400 could be funded. Given limitations on the availability of grants and work study, there was growing concern about the extent to which students had to rely on loans. One financial aid officer noted, "Everytime we increase tuition and fees, students must borrow more money."

Urban universities experienced the same problem as community colleges in keeping students eligible for financial assistance. Their responses were generally less flexible, partly because of concern about their ability to provide adequate services and appropriate courses for late arrivals. In one comprehensive university, students were able to count three three-hour, non-credit remedial courses in maintaining eligibility for state financial aid. If a student did not pass a required competency exam after the first try, the course had to be repeated as an overload. This policy demonstrated one advantage for underprepared students attending community colleges. A transfer student who uses remedial courses to maintain eligibility at a community college can retake the remedial sequence in the university without losing eligibility for financial assistance.

Community college transfers were notorious for making late decisions. Just as it handicapped them in course selection and advising, it also resulted in the receipt of less financial aid than the amount for which they might have been eligible. University requirements that bills be paid following preregistration to avoid cancellation of course reservations compounded the problem. For most universities, bills had to be payed several months in advance of the beginning of a semester to ensure an appropriate selection of courses. Apart from the financial strains caused by this practice, there seemed to be no systematic way of communicating this information to new transfer students.

To cope with this problem, most universities allowed students, who could present a student aid report establishing their eligibility for a Pell grant, to complete registration without payment of fees. Less frequently, special arrangements were available to extend credit for the purchase of books and necessary supplies. One university reported changing a policy that had permitted use of institutional funds to help students who had difficulty qualifying for financial assistance after experience showed that those who arrived late typically left early, with the university holding a worthless note.

Strategies for Improving Student Achievement

Universities, like their community college counterparts, have developed strategies to improve student opportunities for success. The strategies reported here include interventions the universities would implement with additional resources as well as those already in effect. The strategies have been organized into five categories: high schools, community colleges, special programs, support services, academic interventions and administrative actions.

High Schools

There was practically universal recognition that early identification of potential college students was important. In addition to identifying capable candidates as early as possible, preparation during high school years needed to be strengthened. One of the ways universities attempted to strengthen

communication links with high school serving predominantly minority student populations was through the assignment of minority staff members as liaison persons.

There was also agreement that university faculty needed to become more aware of conditions in the public schools from which minority students graduated. The prescription was a simple one: Get faculty more involved in the schools and in the communities they serve. But as in the case of the mice who decided to "bell the cat", there was considerable question about how this desirable objective should be achieved. One university provided a good example of how not to do it. They scheduled an all-day seminar on the retention of black students but failed to invite any of their own black students to the meeting.

A flag ship university not part of the study but located in a relatively urban state capitol of one of the study states, reported a faculty initiated program of considerable promise. Concerned about a deteriorating situation in the public schools attended by their children, faculty members volunteered their time as consultants on the curriculum and as unpaid instructors of enrichment classes for teachers and students. The result was described as a "renaissance" of the public schools. Unfortunately, faculty members who teach in urban universities seldom reside in the school districts from which their more disadvantaged students matriculate.

In working with high school students, considerable emphasis was placed upon increasing motivation and getting students socially involved. Summer challenge programs provided high school students with an intensive experience in academics and group life at many universities. Invitations to cultural and athletic events helped ease the social transition. The director of a special program for minorities in one university conducted seminars for high school students to assist them in improving their scores on the ACT. She also offered seminars to help students present themselves in the best possible light to universities they were interested in attending. She advised universities to "be agressive, they cannot wait for minority students to come to them."

University staff suggested that minority high school students should be urged to apply early and to register early. They should be encouraged to go into solid fields rather then the social sciences. Special programs should be developed to help them use libraries effectively. Finally, staff in one university suggested that the state coordinating board should take the leadership in encouraging the establishment of programs in high schools to give minorities better guidance, particularly in the year before they go to college.

Community Colleges

Perhaps the most noteworthy aspect of university strategies for working with urban community colleges was their relative scarcity. The small number of such strategies reported was particularly puzzling given the fact that more than half of the students on urban university campuses get there by way of

transfer. It would be tempting to interpret the absence of strategies as evidence of a lack of problems but the available data suggest otherwise.

The only strategy mentioned by more than one university involved articulation meetings bringing faculty from community colleges face-to-face with their university colleagues. Such meetings occurred in half the cities involved in the study and took three basic forms. In the first form, a single meeting for the university system was hosted each year by a different university campus. These meetings involved the exchange of information on student performance and the discussion of system level articulation issues but they were not designed to encourage contact between faculty members at the college or department level.

A second variation involved a meeting hosted by a single university for its major feeder community colleges. In the best example of this type of meeting, the morning was devoted to a discussion of university-wide concerns. In the afternoon, faculty members and counselors were hosted by the colleges to which their specializations most closely related and the meetings became working sessions on articulation issues at the department levels.

The third, and in many respects most promising form, involved the establishment of an articulation committee under the joint auspices of a university governing board and a community college governing board. The articulation committee was given authority to appoint working committees of faculty members from universities and community colleges in any discipline where articulation problems were perceived to exist. These committees in turn were charged with defining the nature of the problem more precisely and proposing a solution to their respective state-wide boards for implementation.

A different strategy used with mixed results in one state involved the definition of core curricula in majors under the leadership of the state coordinating board. Those who supported this approach indicated that students who followed the core curriculum closely experienced few problems in transferring. Critics felt the approach was time-consuming, the results went out-of-date quickly or were ignored by many of the four-year institutions, and that the alternative of defining a single general education transfer program would have been preferable.

Categorically Funded Programs

The federal government and a number of states have special programs focused on educationally disadvantaged who meet any two of three criteria: first generation college students, low income, or handicapped. Most urban universities receive funding for such programs. These programs are often organized as a microcosm of the university. Typically, they provide such services as recruiting, counseling, tutoring and basic skills courses in math and English. The courses carry administrative credit to keep students eligible for financial aid but may not be counted toward graduation. One minority administrator responsible for directing such a special program summarized it as "the way the university discharges its responsibilities to minority students."

Those responsible for special programs reported their enrollments included percentages of minority students that were from two to four times the representation of minority students in the rest of the university. In part, this occurred because special program staff often had responsibility for advising on admissions in the "differentially qualified" entering student category. Special study program directors provided studies demonstrating that underprepared students enrolled in their programs, achieved success at rates significantly better than similarly qualified students who entered the university without enrolling in their programs. Special programs were generally well regarded by other members of the university community. But the reported effectiveness of these programs and their acceptance did not seem to motivate universities to invest any of their own funds in making them available to a greater number of students.

The alternative chosen by most universities has been to increase admission standards. In many ways, this choice is defensible. In contrast to community colleges, universities have generally rejected the notion of admitting underprepared students without adequate remedial effort. University staff believed that devoting additional scarce resources to mounting a massive remedial effort would be counter to the purposes for which they exist. Even those who directed programs through which differentially qualified students were admitted emphasized the need for better qualified candidates if their programs were to achieve success within the university environment.

Not the least important of the contributions of the special programs are the minority staff they bring to the university. Beyond conducting special programs, the special program staff provided an important channel of communication between the university and counselors and students in predominately minority high schools and community colleges. Universities typically did not achieve the same improvements in internal communication because of the tendency to fragment special programs and to isolate their staffs from the mainstream of university activities.

Support Services

While many support services for minority students were provided through the special programs described above, not all minority students entered through the special program route. And the problems of retention were by no means limited to minority students. One urban university reported that after the fall semester 40 percent of all entering students would be gone from the university. Universities tolerated the revolving door phenomena as long as each new year produced their replacements. But that is no longer the case and universities are giving increased attention to activities designed to improve retention for all students.

In one university a counseling center responding to a special committee on recruitment and retention, designed a comprehensive student assessment program to help students identify strengths and weaknesses in skills necessary to academic success. In addition to providing an extensive program of career planning, the counseling center focused on helping students plan strategies for coping successfully with the university environment. The center offered a wide range of self-help, non-credit courses. The focus of the center was on

native freshman. Transfer students were not excluded from participation but neither was there any systematic effort to involve them.

There was nearly universal agreement on the importance of residence halls for improving opportunities for minority students. Those universities that had them reported disproportionate numbers of minority students living there. Those universities that did not have them commonly had plans to request such facilities under the rationale that urban students in general and minority students in particular needed alternatives to living at home in order to have the best chance of being successful.

Academic Programs

Academic staff were not unaware of the problems experienced by minority students. Many were sympathetic to assuming greater responsibility for giving minorities a better chance. The very limited number of minority faculty and the lack of experience of non-minority faculty in dealing with issues related to academic achievement was no where more evident than in the diversity of strategies that have been devised and the lack of agreement about which, if any, were most likely to achieve success.

One college of arts and science made the decision to implement two recommendations of an internal task force because as the dean candidly admitted, "There was some reason to believe they might be effective and they were cheap." This college, one of the few to spend its own money on the problem, provided evidence of the peril of combining limited expertise and bargain-basement strategies. One approach involved paying a good student to take notes in a class and to conduct a seminar where other students could come for review and to check the accuracy of their own notes. As of the eighth week of the semester, no minorities had participated in these seminars but then, neither had very many non-minorities.

An academic strategy mentioned twice by chief executive officers, neither of whom had much success in selling the concept to their faculty, involved the establishment of a general or basic college into which all entering students would go until they demonstrated a level of proficiency necessary for admission to the college of their choice. Both of the institutions where the strategy was mentioned admitted large numbers of unprepared students and attempted to serve them with very limited resources. Both had vestibule programs to which students not meeting criteria for admission to a college were assigned. Neither of these vestibule programs was perceived by anyone, including their presidents, as particularly effective. In one of the two, the assignment to the vestibule program was perceived as a punishment, a perception well supported by the program description which was under revision at the time of site visit. The estimate was that no more than 10 percent of those entering this program ever graduated from the university.

The more selective research universities typically did not offer vestibule programs beyond courses and services provided under categorically funded special programs. As an alternative, they emphasized faculty advising and mentoring as key strategies. In particular, emphasis was placed on bringing minority students into contact with role models through an advising or mentoring process. Students were also monitored closely with warning letters

to those who dropped below a 2.5 grade point average or who earned less than a "C" in any course. The letters urged students to meet with a university advisor or to take advantage of other available assistance.

Conclusion

For all research universities hiring more minority faculty members and administrators was seen as the most crucial step in making them more hospitable to black and Hispanic students. A minority staff member in one predominantly white university summed it up, "A major way to retain students is to let them know the university cares about them through recruiting faculty members and training peer advisors to be certain that every minority student has at least one other minority person at the campus with whom to interact."

Another staff member from the same institution added, "We need to show minority students that it is possible for a minority person to achieve in this environment. Currently, no one speaks for minority concerns in senior councils; as a result, they are seen as just one more special interest group and treated accordingly." This large university, serving an urban area heavily populated by minorities, employed only three minority persons in reasonably senior positions: an associate dean, an assistant dean, and one full professor.

While faculty members in all universities suggested such strategies for improving minority student success as writing across the curriculum, more remedial courses, additional tutorial services and permitting students to declare academic bankruptcy, the most coherent set of principles was articulated by a comprehensive university serving a predominately minority student population. The advice they provided gives evidence of their experience in working with large numbers of underprepared students in an inner city setting. Their suggestions included: (1) provide a good orientation program with strong follow-up contact beyond the first session; (2) use proficiency exams to force students to confront deficiencies and deal with them early in their college careers; (3) monitor student progress closely and intervene as soon as problems appear; (4) make the entire staff as accessible as possible to students; (5) provide tutoring that is linked with classes; (6) enforce explicit standards of progress tied to appropriate regulations for dismissal; (7) make certain registration procedures are designed to prevent students from enrolling in classes they are not prepared to take; (8) encourage close working relationships between the counseling and special programs staffs so that students needs can be assessed comprehensively and programs to assist them cooperatively defined; (9) encourage the development of strong student organizations to provide cohesive groups with which students can identify.

Administrative commitment was evident among universities reporting progress in improving minority student success. Administrators in such institutions used resources to support specific interventions, in addition to expressing support in speeches and written documents. In one university, the president promised to increase the expense budget of any department hiring a black faculty member by 10 percent. Two departments hired black faculty members shortly after this offer was made.

Excessive fragmentation limits the effectiveness of many special programs for minority students. In one university, separate programs for Hispanics, American Indians and blacks reported individually to the academic vice president but were not coordinated with university counseling services, admission, or with one another. The programs clearly helped minority students but did not achieve the critical mass evident in the comprehensive university where the president clearly communicated an institutional commitment to an organized and systematic effort to help minority students succeed.

CHAPTER 7

BUILDING BRIDGES

In the preceding chapters, we have characterized community colleges and universities as conflicting cultures based on their dominant values and the practices growing out of those values. We have also suggested that the difference in culture impacts adversely on the baccalaureate achievement of urban minority students who begin their postsecondary education in a community college.

There is another side to the story. Universities and community colleges operate within state contexts that presume cooperation. Legislatures and state coordinating boards have implicit or explicit policies promoting the free exchange of students among public institutions with minimum loss of credit. Political leaders in urban settings subscribe to the American dream of upward mobility without regard to race or socio-economic circumstances. And there is the expectation that public institutions will contribute not only to the realization of that dream, but also to improving the quality of life within the cities where they are located.

The term most often used to describe the activities through which community colleges and universities cooperate to encourage student progress toward the baccalaureate degree is "articulation". In this chapter, we begin by describing state policies promoting cooperation and the institutional responses to these policies in the form of program design and supporting services. We then consider the perceptions of college and university staff members of the barriers that remain and the most promising strategies for overcoming those barriers. We conclude with several case studies that present and analyze the best and worst scenarios found among the study institutions.

State Policies on Articulation

While legislators sometimes react to problems involving loss of credit or deficiencies in student performance by passing laws setting minimum standards, the major source of state level articulation policies are the coordinating boards, particularly those with regulatory powers. Coordinating boards place pressure on baccalaureate institutions to honor the academic transfer work of community colleges and upon community colleges to maintain academic standards comparable to those found in four-year institutions. Unfortunately, state legislated or regulated policies do not guarantee effective transfer. Articulation in its most essential form calls for cooperation, and cooperation depends too frequently on the benefits to participating institutions rather than the needs of their students. So actual cooperation, as distinct from the legislated variety, is governed first by the law of supply and demand, and second, by the personality and preferences of those involved. When there are too few high school graduates to maintain desired enrollment levels, articulation improves; when personalities clash, articulation deteriorates. The tone for the implementation of articulation policies is established by

institutional leaders. Where strong leaders emphasize the importance of institutional cooperation, policies work. Where institutional leaders are lukewarm, or even hostile toward institutional cooperation, policies have little bearing on the transfer opportunities actually provided to individual students.

The policies among states participating in the study can be described in terms of a typology of articulation policies developed by Kintzer and Wattenbarger (1985). Florida, Illinois and Texas represent examples of states where formal and legally based policies govern the articulation process. In Florida, such policies define general education requirements for two and four-year institutions, specify the times when required courses can be offered at each level, and designate services to aid the movement of students through the system. There is also a statewide common calendar and a uniform course numbering system, as well as a prohibition against requiring students to take lower division general education courses if they have previously completed the prescribed general education program in another institution. Florida also requires all lower division students to complete a College Level Academic Skills Test before permission is granted to continue in upper division studies at a public university.

Illinois requires two-year colleges to establish admission criteria for their baccalaureate programs comparable to those established by four-year colleges and universities. There is also a compact which states that associate degree graduates from state community colleges should be accepted in public universities with upper division standing. Texas has established a basic core of general academic courses which can be transferred freely among all public institutions.

Arizona, Missouri and New Jersey are categorized by Kintzer and Wattenbarger as states which concentrate on formulas for equating credits in general education and in the major while exhibiting less concern about supporting services. New Jersey, for example, provides a "full-faith-and-credit" plan which guarantees graduates of approved transfer programs that their general education credits will be accepted in their entirety toward the general education requirements of a New Jersey public university (not necessarily the one of choice). Missouri provides guidelines setting forth "the expected course of action or set of circumstances that apply to decision making in which transfer of credits is involved" (Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education, 1984, p. 2). Graduates of two-year associate in arts or associate in science degrees, are guaranteed junior standing provided they have pursued a program mutually agreed upon by the community college and the university and have earned the appropriate degree. Arizona has an articulation committee jointly appointed by the Board of Regents and the State Community College Board. This committee operates through program subcommittees comprised of discipline-based faculty members who have the responsibility for identifying and resolving an entire range of problems impacting effective transfer. A Course Equivalency Guide is also published annually and some institutions exchange curriculum representatives.

The Kintzer and Wattenbarger typology breaks down when it is applied to Pennsylvania and Ohio. Pennsylvania straddles two categories reflecting a mixture of state system policies and individual agreements among institutions that creates an articulation environment too complex to describe in simple

terms. Ohio, like Pennsylvania, has a combination of state system policies and agreements among individual institutions. While Ohio, like Missouri, has a statement on guidelines for articulation adopted by its Board of Regents, the statement stops short of defining the expected course of action, suggesting instead a program of voluntary compliance among affected institutions. At the time of the site visit, the Ohio statement had not been revised for eight years and was regarded as a minor influence by the state's institutions. Among participating states, Ohio and Texas were both cited by Kintzer and Wattenbarger as states that have made the most impressive progress in improving opportunities for transfer from community/technical college vocational programs.

Despite variations in the regulatory environment, all states had some form of articulation agreement governing transfer between two and four-year institutions. Sometimes the agreements were the product of negotiations between individual institutions; in others, they were prescribed, at least in general format, by coordinating board directives. But even in states with formal and legally based policies, the reality of institutional relationships was often at variance with the intent of policy. In one state, for example, a major receiving university had never accepted a state compact and continued the practice of defining its articulation policy on a community college-by-community college basis. Because of the wide variation in the preparation of students being admitted from the community colleges with which the university regularly interacted, this resistance to the statewide policy was not only understood by coordinating board officials but implicitly accepted.

As noted earlier, the reality of articulation practices is determined not by the semantic content of written policies or agreements, but rather by the concern and commitment exhibited by institutional leaders. In this section, we have provided some general sense of state influences on interinstitutional relationships. We turn now to a consideration of programmatic attempts to deal with articulation issues and some of the services provided by states and institutions to aid student movement.

Transfer Programs

Community colleges typically offer four different associate degree programs. The most widely offered, the associate in arts degree, involves completion of 60 to 64 semester hours of credit and conforms, in general, to the lower division requirements of the baccalaureate degree in most fields where specialization does not begin until the junior year. The associate in science degree, also widely offered, follows the pattern of the associate in arts degree but places greater emphasis on math and science to prepare transfer students for majors in these areas or in engineering. All of the community colleges participating in the study offered these two degrees.

The associate in applied science degree generally requires completion of more credit hours than the two transfer oriented degrees with approximately two-thirds of the required work in an area of specialization and the remaining one-third devoted to general education. This degree is intended to prepare students for immediate employment in a career field after leaving the

community college, or to upgrade students in a field where they are already employed. All of the community colleges in the study offered this degree or some close variation.

Most of the colleges in the study also offered an associate in general studies degree. This degree requires completion of 60 to 64 semester hours but has few or no distribution requirements and often permits the inclusion of a specified number of remedial credits. The purpose of the degree beyond permitting the award of a credential to students completing an almost random selection of courses, is unclear, but no community college recommends the degree for students interested in transfer. Nevertheless, students have appeared at university admissions offices with this degree and objected when they did not receive the same treatment specified for the more restrictive associate in arts or associate in science programs.

A variety of program designs were observed among the transfer curricula. In states with more formalized articulation agreements, the tendency was toward a core or general education component for the lower division. This was sometime described as a two-plus-two design with upper division institutions agreeing to accept core general education courses as satisfying their lower division requirements for a baccalaureate degree. The use of the core concept in developing institution to institution articulation agreements was highly regarded by community college administrators because it provided substantial flexibility in institutional instructional approaches.

Where state coordinating agencies had less regulatory authority or assumed a more consultative role, articulation agreements often were negotiated on a major-by-major basis. This model required consultation among faculty members from universities and community colleges to determine the type, level and sequence of lower division courses transferable for each major, including those courses to be treated as electives and those meeting specialization requirements.

The full-faith-in-credit policy described earlier assumed a comparability of lower division courses regardless of where offered. Course comparability in this setting was determined by a panel of faculty from affected institutions. In other states, the determination was made through an analysis of catalog descriptions or course outlines and was closely controlled by university faculty members.

Regardless of articulation agreements, the determination of which credits apply toward a degree and which counted as electives, occurred at the university at the department level. The credit-by-credit determination of courses meeting requirements for a degree recognized the ultimate authority of faculty in the university to determine course content, standards of performance, and credit worth.

Community college administrators have not been happy with the degree of influence over their curricula exercised by university faculty through the process of evaluating courses for transfer. Their effort to gain increased autonomy has taken several forms, including a push to gain acceptance for specialized courses offered in the associate in applied science degrees, and in some instances, ambiguous labeling, which places the burden of determining course transferability on the university. In general, students have

experienced the fewest problems when following the most closely prescribed programs. While greater curricular autonomy has undoubtedly served the needs of many community college clients, it has contributed to the problems experienced by those seeking baccalaureate degrees.

In contrast to general studies programs, capstone programs (also called two-plus-two programs in some settings), have enhanced opportunities for transfer by building an upper division sequence on specialized work completed in the community college thereby allowing a student with an applied associate degree to earn the baccalaureate degree in an additional two years. In recent years, capstone programs have developed in areas such as allied health and the technologies. Capstone programs were quite rare in research universities, but relatively common in comprehensive universities. They were always available in the upper division comprehensive universities because such institutions relied upon community college preparation in the lower division for any major they offered.

Where research universities offered capstone programs, it was often in response to the pressures of a state coordinating board which had required the program as a condition for approving a new degree. Interestingly, four universities in the study offered capstone programs in nursing, a field that is generally regarded as unpromising for this approach because of perceived opposition from the National League for Nursing. Other capstone programs were found in law enforcement, hotel/motel and restaurant management, computer science and art. However, capstone programs appeared to lead a tenuous existence as university faculty preferred to admit their own freshmen. Their resistance to programs making them dependent on community college faculty for lower division preparation was not dissimilar to the resistance of community college administrators to the influence on their transfer programs exercised by university faculty. University faculty may accept capstone programs to secure approval for a degree, but once approval has been granted, efforts turn to securing approval for a generic program. Among research universities where capstone programs had been initiated under duress, the programs either were not working well or were in a state of transition. The major exception to this generalization involved bachelor of technology programs built on the applied science degree in engineering-related fields.

One comprehensive university did offer a second option, the open university degree. While there are many variations of this program, all permit students substantial flexibility in counting credit from previous work. Some may also award credit for life experience. With the assistance of an advisor, students develop a contract with the university specifying an appropriate objective and an acceptable plan for achieving that objective. Some programs require completion of a minimum number of hours in residence, but the requirement can usually be fulfilled through extension courses, courses offered by television, or other arrangements designed to avoid disruption in the student's job or family life. As one example, students who graduated in auto mechanics from a community college were able to earn the baccalaureate degree with full credit applied from their auto mechanics program. Several faculty members teaching in the auto mechanics program at the community college had earned this degree.

In spite of important value differences between community colleges and universities, attention has been given to program practices designed to

improve opportunities for student movement. In addition to efforts aimed at the design of compatible programs, a variety of advising tools and services were available in many settings.

Most universities published curriculum guides through which they guaranteed the acceptance of specified courses offered by a community college as long as a "C" grade was earned. In at least two states, universities and community colleges operated according to a common calendar. In one metropolitan area, a common transcript had been developed by a consortium of two and four-year institutions to facilitate admissions and placement decisions and to maintain continuity in the award of financial aid. A community college district and a university in another city, were preparing to implement the electronic transfer of credits and had approved a consortium agreement that kept students concurrently enrolled in both institutions eligible for financial assistance where such students would not have been eligible based on the total number of credits taken at either institution independently.

One state level articulation agreement provided a mechanism to resolve student or institutional grievances arising from the transfer of credits. Representatives from colleges and universities met regularly with their counterparts from the state office to review articulation practices and to deal with problems. A common practice involved the identification of an individual with specific responsibilities for maintaining good relationships with an adjacent community college or university, and resolving articulation problems as these were identified.

To this point, we have suggested that universities and community colleges constitute different cultures which often give rise to practices that impede the orderly transfer of students, in general, and of minority students in particular. However, we have also identified state and institutional policies and practices designed to keep the system open for those it was intended to serve. In the next two sections of this chapter, we report barriers as these are perceived by staff members in community colleges and universities.

Barriers: The Community College Perspective

The barriers identified by community college faculty and administrators centered on the attitudes and practices of university staff members, as well as the preparation of students coming to the community college. The relative absence of self-criticism could have been a normal reaction to outsiders questioning institutional practice, or it could have resulted from an absence of evaluative data. But whatever the reason, few respondents saw articulation barriers as a consequence of community college attitudes or practices.

Criticism of University Attitudes and Practices

University administrators and faculty members were consistently criticized for their condescending attitudes toward community colleges. The president of an urban community college who had assumed her position a year earlier reported no welcoming communication or any subsequent contact from the president of

a nearby public university. She observed, "I guess it is my responsibility to initiate contact; apparently he (the university president) is too busy to extend a welcome or to discuss ways in which we might work together. I have seen him in several group meetings but I am sure he didn't even recognize me." The dean of a college of arts and sciences agreed that attitudes represented a major barrier, "University faculty view community colleges and their products as inferior. While the data contradict that view, the attitude persists. Interestingly, community colleges defend themselves on the basis of data, but it doesn't change the attitude of university faculty at all."

University faculty members were described as unfairly critical of those who teach in community college. Some community college faculty members said their university counterparts did not understand the community college mission, and were themselves so preoccupied with the "publish or perish syndrome" that their views of the teaching function were reactionary. One faculty member added, "It's ludicrous that they (the English faculty) have been criticizing us for the level of preparation of our students. First of all, three of us are employed there as adjunct faculty members and two-thirds of us completed our graduate training with them!"

Community college English faculty were especially critical of the research university practice of staffing composition courses almost exclusively with teaching assistants. Where universities accepted "D" grades awarded by their own teaching assistants while refusing to accept "D"s from the community college, the criticism degenerated into hostility. To offset adverse reactions from community college faculty, several universities no longer accepted "D" grades for courses in the major regardless of where the grade was earned.

Community college staff members also criticized university policies encouraging students to transfer early despite the considerable body of evidence positively relating persistence and achievement to the number of hours completed at a community college before transferring. Also, a source of concern were changes in university programs or admission practices without sufficient advance notice to the community colleges that would be affected. One university instituted a writing test for transfer students and required those who did poorly to enroll in a special writing course. The community college perceived the practice as discriminatory since native students were not required to take the same examination. The issue became so charged that the presidents of community colleges in that state acted collectively in demanding that the requirement be removed, or that native as well as transfer student be tested. Eventually the university agreed to test its own students as well as transfers.

In a different university, faculty decided to change the mathematics sequence without conferring with community college staff who were using the universities curriculum guides to advise students. The director of admissions unwittingly poured fuel on the controversy by declaring that the catalog governing university requirements was the last one printed prior to a student's matriculation. He added, "There is no consideration for students who follow the catalog in effect at the time they begin in a community college." In this situation, community college faculty members and administrators were ready to encourage their students to challenge the university through the courts.

Community college student affairs personnel were frequently critical of university policies for their absence of concern about the background and needs of transfer students. They argued that universities should establish practices designed to facilitate transition from the more supportive community college environment to the university environment. One counselor observed, "They think their bulletin boards and the printed materials lying around are tantamount to effective counseling and advisement. They simply don't understand that our students lack the middle class orientation and are not self-directed or self-confident."

Student Preparation

Even though the question about barriers produced a substantial amount of criticism of university policies and practices, for most respondents the single most important impediment to effective transfer was student preparation. And, in discussing this concern, there was at least implicit criticism of community college practices. One humanities division chair noted, "The principal barrier to transfer for our students is that the reading, writing, and mathematics skills not learned in high school, are not learned at the community college either." He continued on a note reminiscent of the findings of a recent study on literacy to which we have previosly alluded: (Richardson, Fisk and Okun, 1983), "Teachers have learned to teach content without requiring students to read or write."

While problems with basic skills were pervasive, community college faculty members were also concerned about student attitudes and motivation. Staff members pointed to the difficulty of communicating to minority students the difference higher education could make in their lives in the absence of role models. There was a general sense that encouraging students, who were poor, to defer immediate gratification in the hope of future rewards represented an almost hopeless challenge.

Barriers: The University Perspective

While the central theme of barriers perceived by those in community colleges involved the attitudes of university personnel, the central theme of barriers perceived by univerities was quality. When reduced to its lowest possible denominator, quality meant well prepared, independent learners who reflected the middle class values of scholarship, inquiry and the value of education itself.

At the extreme, the suggested way to assure such quality was to eliminate the community college experience entirely. A vice president of academic affairs at one urban university declared:

> The policy that inhibits successful baccalaureate programs is the state requirement for the majority of academic high school graduates to go through the community college system. It is quite evident that the policy is inappropriate when you consider the fact a higher per-

centage of high school graduates from this region of the state actually go to institutions out-of-state. This is because they want to avoid going to the community colleges.

The same administrator indicated that community colleges were an appropriate point of access for minorities although he was not clear whether enough minorities were achieving such access.

Quality concerns of universities also focused on grading practices as previously discussed. Several university administrators suggested that community colleges used grades as an incentive device for improving the self-concept of minority students rather than as standards against which students were expected to achieve. As noted elsewhere, community college faculty members conceded their use of norm referenced grading systems in contrast to the criterion referenced systems more commonly used in universities. So, the observations of these administrators were not inaccurate, but their interpretation of the practice underscored the point make earlier about different cultures.

University faculty and administrators also pointed to differences in course content as a barrier. Those in arts and sciences criticized depth of coverage. Several observed that community college faculty did not cover the same content even when they used the same text. University faculty in specialized areas were sometimes critical of the perspective from which community college courses were taught. One business faculty member commented, "They teach that course from a sociological perspective but we teach it from an economic perspective. Their students are simply out of sync with ours."

A somewhat different perspective was offered by an associate dean of engineering, "Community college faculty have no adequate understanding of where their courses lead at the upper division. They need some sense of what higher level courses are all about if they really want continuity for their students."

A vice president of academic affairs explained why he taught a freshmen level chemistry class on alternate years and an advanced course during the intervening years. The freshmen course reacquainted him with lower division clientele and the subject matter causing him, "to rethink my own approach and to examine a strategy to make these students actually think through what they are studying. Community college faculty," he observed, "are vulnerable to teaching in the same manner year-after-year without examining the way they are teaching or whether they are maintaining the rigor and standards which are needed."

One community college instructional approach singled out for special criticism, involved the use of mini or "flex" courses. Essentially, this approach involved dividing the content of standard three or four credit courses into discrete one credit modules that could be offered in compressed sessions. Originally developed in specialized areas to accommodate the needs of business and industry, the practice had been extended by some community

colleges to academic courses as well. In addition to concerns about quality and content, one university official noted, "Those courses contribute to a mind set on the part of students that a baccalaureate program is nothing more than a required number of green stamps to be accumulated the easiest way possible."

While university personnel did identify course content, grading standards and continuity as potential barriers to effective transfer, their general attitude toward articulation was one of complacency. And from the perspective of much of the evidence on the transfer process, their complacency seemed justified. For many students the transfer process works well. In contrast to university personnel, the predominant reaction among community college faculty and administrators was frustration. This difference is a consequence of the control universities exercise over the articulation process. As one result, they are able to protect themselves against community college practices they dislike without jeopardizing the flow of needed students. The use of such simple expedients as selectively granting elective credit or administering validation exams presents an inconvenience to transfers from suburban community colleges. Urban community colleges, by contrast, experienced these practices as serious impediments to the progress of their clientele and were critical of the attitudes that led to additional difficulties for an all ready high-risk population.

Community College Articulation Proposals

Community college administrators and faculty recommended a combination of internal reforms and changes in university practices to improve student opportunities for trouble-free transfer. One proposed reform illustrated the differing impacts of current practice on inner city and suburban institutions. In one district, the white president of a suburban community college observed, "People don't pay much attention to the transfer program, its working." The black administrator of a sister inner city college emphasized the need for a two-tier transfer program with selective admissions for the upper tier, while maintaining open admissions to the lower.

Other proposals for internal reforms paralleled many of the strategies for improving student achievement discussed in Chapter 5. Included among these proposals were honors programs, stronger liberal arts programs, more competency based outcomes, and released time for faculty members to coordinate liberal arts offerings.

Administrators emphasized a number of practices: providing students with realistic information about themselves and their alternatives at the time of admission, helping students identify objectives early and assisting them to develop individual educational plans, working to help students raise expectations of themselves, and insuring that information about transfer opportunities and requirements reached students prior to their first registration. Administrators also emphasized the need for community college faculty and counselors to visit four-year institutions.

Administrators also pointed to the need to improve faculty advising, to require high standards, and to enhance learning support systems and financial

aid. They added that students should not be required to choose between meeting the graduation requirements of a community college catalog or following the transfer guide published by a four-year institution. And, despite protests to the contrary from top administrators, there was a clear sense among faculty and middle-level managers that community colleges in general, and inner city colleges in particular, placed excessive emphasis upon vocational education to the detriment of the transfer function.

Beyond actions community colleges might take to strengthen the transfer function, a number of needed changes in university practices were also identified. Perhaps the most fundamental was the need for improved communication. Suggested forms of communication included: clear-cut statements on transfer policy, visits by program representatives to improve advising for potential majors, closer working relationships between university counselors and their community college counterparts, faculty exchanges, and direct and continuing feedback on the performance of transfer students.

None of these proposals were revolutionary and all were found in operation in one or more of the participating cities. Interestingly, however, most of these practices represented exceptions and none of the pairs of institutions were involved in a systematic effort to implement the entire range. For example, a majority of the universities relied upon the Family Privacy Act (Buckley Amendment) as a rationale for providing summary statistics or none at all on the performance of community college transfers. Illustrating the importance of individual action in making articulation work, one university vice president received a request from a community college district for student specific data. His request to university legal counsel produced an opinion acknowledging the exceptions in the act dealing with research and the improvement of educational programs, but concluding with the admonition, "If you want to be absolutely safe, we suggest you withhold the information." Deciding against being "absolutely safe", the vice president directed that the information be provided thereby establishing a continuing dialogue that led to the exchange of data tapes each semester in a form suitable for follow-up studies and ultimately, to a decision on the part of the two staffs to develop the electronic exchange of transcripts.

In fairness, it was not always the university that blocked the feedback on transfer student performance. In one city, a university institutional research office offered to provide this data. The community college district operating in a sensitive political environment indicated informally that it was not interested. The unstated reason was that such information would reflect adversely on the declining performance of students attending an inner city college, a situation the district preferred not to publicize or confront.

With the exception of one state where the legislature had mandated that public universities provide regular feedback information and the university described above, only two other universities voluntarily provided information. Unfortunately, the information provided was less systematic and less comprehensive than needed for optimal usefulness.

Faculty exchanges were widely identified as the single most promising strategy for reducing transfer barriers. Where contacts did exist between university and community college faculty, those involved were uniformly

positive and reported that such contacts not only enhanced university faculty views of community college programs but, also provided leadership in strengthening community college articulation practices. However, motivating faculty members from research universities to devote additional time to teaching related activities when they believe they are already burdened with more teaching responsibilities than their research interests can accommodate constitutes a major challenge. The two universities that had made the greatest strides in coping with this issue were both recipients of external grants that provided incentives for joint activity among university and community college faculty, and in one instance, high school faculty as well. The area of faculty exchange would appear to be a particularly promising arena for intervention by foundations interested in promoting more effective articulation.

Outside of joint teaching activity, several promising forms of cooperation were identified. In one setting, where community college faculty were suspicious of university standards in grading writing samples that were used to place native and transfer students in a composition sequence, it was agreed that samples would be evaluated by both groups with joint resolution where serious differences occurred. In other settings, universities invited faculty members from a community college to sit on committees dealing with the revisions of admission requirements, the construction of an exam for advanced placement, and in one setting, college level curriculum committees. Experiences in these examples suggested that the two most reliable ways for quieting criticism of university practices involved participation and equity. Universities that involved community college faculty in design or evaluation and treated community college transfers the same way they treated their own native students, received high marks for their efforts to improve articulation.

Finally, from a community college perspective there were actions that should be taken by state coordinating boards to improve opportunities for minority students to earn the baccalaureate degree. One such action involved the improved definition of institutional mission to limit competition among public institutions. In those states where this had not been accomplished, community college and university personnel saw competition for students as one of the most serious barriers to effective transfer. Also important from the community college perspective was giving preferred status to the transfer associate degree by guaranteeing those who earned them, junior status without the course-by-course evaluation typically applied to those transferring without a degree. In states where the associate degree was given preferred status, more students graduated from community colleges and articulation procedures appeared to function more smoothly. In general, community college administrators favored a stronger coordinating board role in mandating articulation practices.

University Articulation Proposals

As previously noted, universities controlled the articulation process and so were better satisfied with existing arrangements than their community college colleagues. Without exception, universities resented intrusions from state coordinating boards, however well-meaning, and were particularly opposed

to having them exert greater influence over the curriculum. Reflecting their satisfaction with current procedures, universities advanced relatively few suggestions for improvement.

Chief among the suggestions advanced was the need for faculty and counselors in community colleges to better prepare minority students for the university's culture and expectations. One university dean observed, "Most community college transfer students come to us expecting things to be done for them; we expect them to be self-directed and independent." But sometimes student behavior can be misinterpreted. Speaking of transfer students from a predominantly minority community college, a dean in a different urban university noted, "The students from community college arrive here feeling they know all about university campus life. They are so independent they never seem to ask questions or to come to us seeking help." Review of the statistics for this university revealed an extremely high attrition rate for minority transfer students the first semester after admission. Clearly, there were explanations other than the independence for the lack of minority student use of university services.

Faculty members expressed concern that students frequently came to the university without completing math requirements; thus, eliminating themselves from many of the more desirable majors and inviting problems with course sequencing. In reflecting their concern with standards, several administrators and faculty members suggested that community colleges implement assessment procedures and withhold grades until specified levels of performance had been achieved. One department chairman observed, "If they would only recognize the importance of quality control at their end of the line, we'd be happy to accept their students." A faculty member at another university declared, "They really need to institute a writing requirement across the curriculum because that's the only way their students will ever learn to write."

At two universities, staff members proposed that community colleges institute an ongoing process of program review and institutional self-study for their transfer programs much like the process used by specialized and institutional accrediting agencies. The self-study process as proposed would involve not only community college faculty and administrators but representatives from universities as well. One university administrator suggested that the state coordinating board should require such self-study in the absence of action by local institutions initiating such a process.

While university staff were not reluctant to provide advice to their community college counterparts, much of what they said applied to their own internal practices as well. Several universities did not have adequate curriculum guides for transfer students, even though, university staff directly involved in the articulation process felt such guides were essential and that their preparation and maintenance should be an assigned responsibility. Staff members were also critical of the absence of systematic procedures for determining course equivalencies and for reviewing transcript credits.

Some university administrators suggested that universities should either accept transfer students or reject them rather than subjecting them to rules and regulations designed to discourage them and make it more difficult for

them to succeed. Mentioned as particularly problematic were the recalculation of grade point averages using different rules from those applied in the community college and the excessive award of elective credits in the departmental evaluation of transcripts.

Underlying most of the suggestions for improving articulation was an evident need for greater communication. One dean noted, "If we could just develop a sense of collegiality between university and community college faculty, 90 percent of the problems would go away." Complicating the challenge of developing such a sense of collegiality was the difference between those who identified problems and those who were in a position to do something about them. Administrators of university programs for minority students often held views of articulation not significantly different from those in community colleges, but senior administrators and faculty members were much less aware of these issues and less inclined to see them as problems requiring priority attention.

Summing It Up

One of the assumptions that governed the design of this study was that those who established public urban community colleges and urban universities in the same cities at about the same point in time had some expectation that the two institutions would work together. Reasonable levels of cooperation were found in half of the cities in the study. In all states formal articulation policies, some emanating from the state and others from the local institution, were designed to accomplish an orderly progression from lower division to upper division work.

Regardless of state role, the articulation process was controlled at the operational level by senior institutions, a reality resented by community colleges. It was not uncommon for university administrators to take the position stated by one dean, "Bureaucratic attempts at articulation are largely doomed to failure." This position was of course consistent with the preference of universities to limit the influence of the state coordinating boards on their curriculum. It was also consistent with the limited influence administrators typically exerted over the curriculum within the university setting.

The danger in presenting a synthesis of articulation practices, as we have done in this chapter, involves the tendency to focus on individual practices rather than outcomes. To guard against that possibility, we conclude this chapter with four case studies presenting best and worst case scenarios as well as the lessons they teach about effective articulation.

Best Scenario 1

A university by virtue of its history and perceived mission, may develop a positive relationship with community colleges despite the absence of formal policies, meetings, or agreements. This type of "best practice relationship,"

however, is heavily dependent on the personalities of administrators as evidenced by the first case.

Blue Collar University, one of the older universities in the study, had a reputation for being extremely supportive of community colleges and open to the transfer student. More than 60 percent of its student population were transfer students and two-thirds of them came from nearby community colleges. Except for a position paper on articulation developed at the state level nearly a decade earlier there were no formal articulation policies in evidence between Blue Collar and any community college, including the one located in the same city. Administrators reported no formal recruitment of transfer students and no systematic efforts to confer with community college staff on curriculum continuity.

While Blue Collar administrators reported some of the same criticisms of community college practices identified in other cities, the criticism seemed more temperate. Community college administrators and faculty, while critical of several Blue Collar practices, nevertheless spoke positively of the university as a major recipient of their transfer students.

The founder of Blue Collar had been dismayed by the elitism of nearby institutions of higher education. A dedication plate on the administration building explained his sentiment that the highest priority for the university should be the children of working class families who were the first generation to enter higher education. The first generation college-goer was the dominant theme for the university among current faculty and administrators as well.

Also contributing to Blue Collar's positive image was the support it had provided during the early 1960s when community colleges were being established in its state. The development of community colleges had been strongly resisted by the state's land grant university because of an extensive branch campus operation. In contrast, Blue Collar had not only publicly endorsed the establishment of community colleges, but also deeded an estate owned in a suburban county for the campus of a community college.

The black director of admissions at Blue Collar explained contemporary articulation arrangements which continued in the positive tradition established during the 1960s.

> My predecessor was assigned to work with community colleges until he retires next year, to recruit students and to overcome transfer problems. He and the director of counseling at the community college had a special relationship for many years and so he began to go over there on a regular basis and to identify some of the grievances of the faculty. At the same time, he has been well-liked by our faculty and has done the same thing here. He became an ombudsman between the institution and for the community college transfer students. He even began to assist community colleges in some of their institutional efforts and follow-up studies to determine what happened to their students here. We presently have a significant transfer study being carried out where we provide the transcript tapes to the community college and they do the actual data analysis and report writing. But, I don't know what is going to happen after he retires because

nobody here thinks he's doing anything of major importance. I know they don't see his function as one that will be continued after he retires.

Best Scenario 2

A university can also develop a positive relationship through deliberate policies and by assigning resources to the task. Methodical University had carefully designed its practices to support effective transfer. Articulation was prominent among the priorities of the administration and the office of community relations was charged with promoting the institution's interest in transfer students. The director of the office was responsible for recruitment and promotion, communications and liaison, and student advocacy as well as planning and institutional research concerning community college relations or transfer students. Since the director reported to the academic vice president, discussions of problems led to prompt action.

Regular visits to college campuses and attendance at state-level meetings of presidents and academic deans contributed to the perception that Methodical wanted to have the best possible relationship with the state community colleges. Articulation concerns, whether identified at the state level or through campus visits, were placed on the agenda of the university administrative council which included among its members the director of community college relations.

Some recent interventions designed by Methodical include a special orientation day for transfer students, an annual community college articulation conference, and the routine provision of feedback information on the progress of community college graduates. Methodical was also deeply involved in the cooperative design of other initiatives and practices which focused on the effective transition of community college students to the university.

Worst Scenario 1

State policies and institutional agreements while helpful, are not sufficient to achieve effective transfer in the absence of commitment from key university staff. Where there is an absence of such commitment, it is the inner-cities that are most adversely affected. New University was located in a state where a formal articulation agreement which called for comparability between courses offered at community colleges and at universities, had been adopted by the state coordinating board for public comprehensive universities. New as a research university was not bound by the agreement, and it had no articulation agreement with any community college, although its administrators maintained that the spirit of the statewide articulation agreement was observed.

The dean of the college of arts and sciences spoke glowingly of the priority accorded to transfer students:

> Fifteen years ago our policy for transfer students was essentially one of "fill-in-the-gaps". Now we have a deliberate policy and concern for the transfer student because we know that while two-thirds of our incoming students are high school graduates, over half of our graduates are transfer students. Since our students are so mobile and so many attend part-time, we find that transfer students are persisting better than native students."

Analysis of the universities fact book however indicated that student transfers to the College of Arts and Sciences were predominantly from suburban community colleges. Transfer students from the inner city community college, whose numbers had been decreasing steadily for several years, were accommodated primarily in an evening college with historical roots in the continuing education division of the university system. Students attending this open door unit were predominantly part-time students, typically older than the full-time day students in other units of New University and almost totally transfer students from the inner city college. Students had to complete a second admissions and evaluation process to transfer from this college to one of the other colleges within the university.

Thus, the policy promoted by the state coordinating board was not honored among the 5 colleges within the university and community college students experienced double jeopardy when transferring. Interestingly, urban community college administrators pointed with pride to the number of their former students attending New University. Either they were not aware of or untroubled by the decline in numbers of transfer students in the college of arts and sciences as contrasted with their growing numbers in university college. A reorganization was in progress to integrate the predominantly part-time faculty members in the evening college with the regular departmental faculties of the university. Administrators at New University saw this as an attempt to improve articulation among all units and to reduce some of the problems involved in transferring from the evening college to another unit.

Worst Scenario 2

Where relationships between top university and community college administrators were strained or hostile, institutions subverted the most detailed and carefully defined state articulation policies and ignored any institutional agreements that were in existence. Aspiring University was part of a state system in which articulation policies between community colleges and universities were generally highly effective. The state level articulation agreement provided for a two-plus-two model with upper division specialization built on a general education core.

Until legislation authorized a lower division in the early 1980s, Aspiring University had been an upper division institution. A nearby urban community college resisted the change and predicted dire consequences during the legislative battle that preceded the new status for Aspiring. Understandably, the relationship between the university and the adjacent urban community college was strained if not hostile.

The vice president for academic affairs described Aspiring's lower division curriculum as different from sister institutions in the university system and observed that his faculty did not philosophically believe in the two-plus-two concept. As a result, they had provided for the general education core to be taught over four years for their native students, "because it gave them an opportunity to experience some of their specialization courses during their freshman and sophomore years." When asked how this would dovetail with the programs of transfer students, he candidly admitted, "There probably are problems."

Because Aspiring University had only recently begun to admit lower division students, the consequences for articulation of the new curriculum had yet to be determined. Certainly, the existence of a legislatively mandated cap on lower division enrollments prevented the two institutions from going their separate ways as both sets of administrators seemed to prefer. However, the present relationship was very distant with representatives from the local community college doing everything possible to convince their better students to go to other universities in the state system.

From these cases the importance to the articulation process of student supply and demand as well as the attitudes of principal administrators is apparent. Good will is important but exclusive dependence on historical tradition and the compatibility of administrators is not as reliable as combining good will with effective policies and the allocation of necessary resources. As one administrator noted, "Articulation requires continuous dialogue because there is so much propensity for mischief in the system." In the absence of good will, transfer functions poorly even under the best of state articulation policies.

There are some things community colleges can do to help their students, including a clearer definition of transfer programs and placing emphasis upon exit competencies. There are also actions that universities can take including improved communication, less nit-picking of transcripts at the department level, and more emphasis on articulation as a priority. Because articulation works reasonably well from a university perspective and from the perspective of suburban community college administrators, there is the danger of accepting current practice as satisfactory. Unfortunately, there appears to be much in current practice that impacts adversely on inner city colleges and the heavily minority student populations who attend them. In the next chapter we examine student perceptions as a way of ferreting out additional evidence of practices conducive to a smooth transition between institutions.

CHAPTER 8

STUDENTS EVALUATE BACCALAUREATE OPPORTUNITIES

In Chapter 4, we used the words of community college students to describe their family backgrounds, present realities and future aspirations. From their words and the perceptions of those who worked closely with them, it was clear that differences in achievement were not a function of any fundamental difference in career objectives. If anything, more urban minorities aspired to the baccalaureate degree than was characteristic of community college students in general. In this chapter, we provide an overview of minority students in urban universities and then report the reactions of those who got there by transferring from an urban community college.

Universities reported increasing reliance on transfer students with one reporting a change of 53 to 64 percent over a five-year period. However, trends for the enrollment of black students run directly counter to the transfer phenomenon. Research universities reported decreases for this group over the same five-year period ranging from 4 to 8 percent. While Hispanic students maintained their proportional enrollment for the period, they attended in relation to their proportion in the populations served by the universities at rates significantly lower than blacks.

The emphasis placed by research universities on the recruitment of new high school graduates leads to the enrollment of underprepared minority students who have difficulty meeting university expectations. Minority students entering directly from high school represented 7 percent of the enrollment in one university but 19 percent of those on probation. For Hispanics, the comparable figures were 5 and 12 percent. In the two universities that had studied graduation rates by race, blacks constituted on the average about 12 percent of the entering classes but only 6 percent of the graduating seniors. Among new freshmen in the least selective research universities minority students were disproportionately placed in special programs. In the most extreme example, blacks constituted 11 percent of the undergraduate enrollment and 40 percent of a remedial program for the differentially qualified in one research university.

The performance of minority students who transferred from a community college after completing a transfer associate degree or equivalent was similar to the performance of non-minority students that had completed comparable studies. This finding has considerable importance because it suggests that differences in persistence rates between minority and non-minority students in universities are more a function of the loss of native freshmen than of community college transfers. This hypothesis is supported by the survey results subsequently reported in this chapter as well as by the findings of one major study (Breneman and Nelson, 1981).

The minority students who persisted at the universities studied performed as we have noted in ways not significantly different from other transfers from urban community colleges. They experienced a decline in the first semester grade point average after transferring ranging from the long-observed .5 in non-science courses to 1.0 when grades earned in advanced courses in the

university were compared with grades earned at the community college in prerequisite courses.* Some of the studies used in developing these estimates had been completed by individual faculty members; occasionally, they were available for a college or even the university. Rarely were the findings from these studies reported in the literature or shared with nearby community colleges.

There were important exceptions to the general rule of comparable performance between minority and non-minority students and between community college transfers and native university students. In one city, graduates of a predominantly minority community college were described by faculty as displaying the same competencies in writing and math as those who came directly from high school. The same community college required its students to meet a competency requirement in reading and in this area, transfer students performed at levels significantly exceeding recent high school graduates. The lesson seemed clear. Differences in grading practices and class competition require adaptations to the university environment but requiring competencies as a condition of course completion at the community college can help to bridge the gap.

The degree achievement rates for minority students in urban universities must be interpreted within the context in which these institutions function. Until very recently, the bench mark against which all institutions were measured in assessing their relative success in helping students complete baccalaureate degrees was the 4 or 5 year time frame of the residential institution serving full-time students. A growing number of urban universities now have longitudinal studies extending from 6 to 11 years. And it is becoming increasingly apparent that success for part-time commuting students must be judged against a longer yardstick.

Among urban universities that had studies extending over a 6-8 year period, the results appeared quite comparable. About 13 to 18 percent of the students who entered as freshman graduated within four years. By the end of six years the graduation rate had increased to 25 to 28 percent. Of course graduation rates among moderately selective public universities were largely an artifact of the percentages of full-time students in attendance. And students who attended full-time were more highly concentrated in universities with residence halls; a student service largely absent among most universities participating in this study.

There were other variables that complicated the assessment of urban university success in producing baccalaureate graduates. Most urban universities as previously noted are relatively young institutions offering a limited range of professional programs. None of the universities in our study were able to estimate the number of students who transferred out to seek programs not available on its campus. But among students who did graduate, transfer students were well represented. In a typical university where half of the enrollment was made up of transfers (not all from community colleges) more than half of the graduates in business and two thirds of the graduates in liberal arts were transfer students. Both transfers and minorities were significantly less well represented among engineering graduates, a phenomenon previously noted. We turn now to an examination of how community college

*Statistics reported are from those universities that had completed studies.

transfers evaluated the relative contributions of their university and community college to earning a baccalaureate degree.

The Student Survey

To determine student views of the transfer process, a survey coded to protect anonymity was mailed to randomly selected samples of students who were enrolled at each of the ten participating universities during the Fall 1984 term after completing at least thirty hours of credit at one of the participating community colleges. The survey, a copy of which appears as Appendix A, consisted of 24 forced choice questions and one open-ended question requesting suggestions for improving the transfer process. Each sample included 100 students or the total transfer population for institutions transferring fewer than 100 students. A combination of a $1.00 incentive included with the initial mailing and three follow-up letters produced 740 responses out of 1267 deliverable questionnaires for an overall return rate of 58 percent.

Of the 740 surveys returned, 592 were useable for this analysis. Since some respondents did not give complete data for all questions, obliterated identification codes or gave uninterpretable information about the college attended, percentage totals may not equal 100 in all Tables. Additional minor discrepancies are the result of rounding. Table 8.1 provides summary information on the respondents arrayed by community college and race.

The most important information revealed by this table involves the close relationship between minority representation in the 11 participating community colleges and in the samples of students who transfered to the 9 participating universities. Among the combined student enrollments of the commiunity colleges, the distribution by race was 57 percent caucasian, 34 percent black, 6 percent Hispanic, 2 percent Asian and 1 percent native American. For the combined samples of transfers, the comparable figures were 52 percent caucasian, 34 percent black, 9 percent Hispanic, 5 percent Asian and 0 percent native American. Proportionately, Hispanics and Asians were overrepresented in the sample while all other groups were represented proportionately or underrepresented.

For several reasons, these figures should not be interpreted as evidence that improving the transfer process as a strategy for reducing the discrepancies in baccalaureate achievement between minorities and nonminorities would be ineffective. Minority students constituted close to 100 percent of the enrollments for two community colleges increasing their influence in the aggregated sample of university transfers. In addition, the institutions inlcuded in this study were those optimally placed for contributing to the education of minorities. A more realistic estimate for the general population is provided by the data base for High School and Beyond (Carroll, 1985). For the 1980 high school graduates who entered two-year/junior colleges, 23 percent of the Hispanics, 18 percent of the blacks and 30 percent of the caucasians had transferred to a four-year college by October, 1983. By contrast, minorities were proportionately more likely to transfer to vocational/technical schools.

Table 8.1 Characteristics of Transfer Students by Participating Community Colleges

Community College	Respondents (N)	Return Rate	Racial Distribution in Community College					Racial Distribution in Sample					Majority Gender	Not Speaking English While Growing Up
			Nat Am	Asian	Black	Hisp.	Cauc.	Nat Am	Asian	Black	Hisp.	Cauc.		
Total Sample	(592)							(2) .34	(31) 5	(175) 30	(53) 9	(308) 52		
A	(61)	68	3	2	5	11	79	ø	3	3	3	89	61F	5%
B	(53)	52	1	4	23	11	61	2	4	6	9	77	47F	11
C	(29)	63	.25	1	44	.5	54	ø	4	45	ø	52	69F	3
D	(55)	51	2	ø	95	< 1.5	< 1	ø	ø	95	ø	4	66F	2
E	(22)	51	2	ø	95	< 1.5	< 1	ø	ø	91	ø	ø	55F	23
F	(59)	58	1	9	13	14	62	ø	19	2	15	61	61H	41
G	(66)	70	1	3	52	3	36	ø	11	32	ø	52	55H	23
H	(73)	61	.5	1	18	.5	80	ø	ø	7	1	89	55F	3
I	(62)	59	ø	14	1	48	30	ø	3	11	44	37	58F	45
J	(35)	50	12="other"		59	16	13	ø	9	54	14	9	60F	46
K	(49)	48	ø	6	58	5	31	2	4	41	6	43	57F	16
L	(28)	53	1	2	48	9	39	ø	4	43	4	50	57F	4

Note. All figures in percentages except those in ( ).

The survey results reported in this chapter do provide evidence for the thesis that underprepared minority students may increase their chances of persisiting to a baccalaureate degree by beginning in a community college. The attrition rates for underprepared minority students who begin in a university in a special admissions category, as reported by those institutions that had collected data on this group, were very high. And minority transfers from community colleges graduate at rates comparable to their nonminority counterparts, a performance record clearly different from the experiences of underprepared minorities who enter universities as native freshmen.

Females were somewhat overrepresented. While they constituted 43 percent of the institutional enrollments, they represented 47 percent in the transfer samples. These findings were consistent with the literature which suggests female students are somewhat more likely to transfer.

Table 8.2 provides a breakout of the sample by racial group. Black students were on the average older than the other groups. A much higher percentage of black students were female, a phenomenon that has been widely noted and that is generating increased concern among black professionals.

For the total group of transfers, females dominated all fields of study except for math, engineering and the physical sciences where traditional male dominance continued. (See Table 8.3) Males and females were equally represented in computer science and business/accounting. Black students were overrepresented in allied health, education and social sciences. They were most seriously underrepresented in mathematics, physical sciences, and engineering and related technologies. Hispanics were seriously underrepresented in fields requiring science and mathematics and generally were overrepresented in the same fields as blacks. The pattern for Asian students was as expected. Clearly while black students were proportionately represented among these transfer institutions, the fields chosen confirm concerns about the avoidance of career areas related to mathematics and the sciences. The same was true for Hispanics. In addition, it seems likely that the underrepresentation of females in science related fields was largely a phenomenon of the career choices of black females who dominated their transfer cohort. Also, of interest was the significant relationship between growing up in a non-English speaking environment and the choice of math and science related majors.

While conforming in general to the patterns noted above, there was diversity among community colleges in the choice of majors by transfer students. For example, among transfers from community colleges with black enrollments of more than 40 percent, the proportion of transfer students selecting majors in engineering and the hard sciences ranged from 7 to 26 percent. The institution that recorded the highest percentage of its students entering science related fields also had the most serious attrition of black students; blacks represented 57 percent of the community college's enrollment but only 32 percent in those transferring from the institution. The data suggested an inverse relationship between the emphasis placed on math and science by a community college and the probability of its black students transferring. But the results also suggest that inner city institutions can make choices about their curriculum with such choices reflected in the career aspirations of their transfer students.

Table 8.2 Race, Gender, English Speaking Background and Age of Transfer Students

Race	(N)	%	Majority % Gender	% Non-English Speaking When Growing Up	% Each Age Group			
					∠ 22	23-35	36-45	46+
Asian/Pacific Islander	(31)	5	55M	81	29	65	6	Ø
Black/Afro Americans	(178)	30	65F	6	15	53	21	11
Hispanic	(53)	9	55F	79	34	58	6	2
Caucasian (White)	(308)	52	51F	7	29	55	10	6
* Total	(592)		55F	19	24	56	17	7

* Named categories do not include all respondents.

Table 8.3 Gender, Race and English Speaking Background of Transfer Students By Field of Study

Field	(N)	%	% Majority Gender	% Each Race Choosing Field				% Non English Speaking While Growing Up
				Asian	Blk	Hisp	Cauc	
Allied Health	(61)	10	90F	7	12	2	11	11
Arts/Humanities	(49)	8	61F	3	6	8	11	10
Biological Sciences	(28)	5	68F	4	6	2	5	21
Business/ Accounting	(187)	32	50F	14	29	36	35	12
Computer Science	(36)	6	50F	17	8	8	4	36
Education/ Human Services	(57)	10	75F	Ø	17	11	7	11
Engineering/ Architecture/ Related Technologies	(74)	13	84M	48	6	6	15	38
Physical Sciences	(9)	2	56M	Ø	1	2	2	11
Mathematics	(7)	1	57M	3	<1	2	1	29
Social Sciences	(39)	7	59F	4	10	13	4	23
All Else	(31)	6	55F	Ø	5	11	5	19

Table 8.4 confirms the role of urban community colleges as predominantly institutions for first generation college students. Only in the case of fathers of Asian students had a majority progressed beyond high school graduation. Mothers were somewhat less educated than fathers for all groups. About 8 percent of the black respondents did not provide educational information on fathers, reflecting perhaps the large number of single parent black families headed by women. Asian fathers and mothers were the best educated. The percentages of parents holding bachelor's degrees or higher ranged from 8 percent for black fathers and 10 percent for black mothers, to 37 percent for Asian fathers and 33 percent for Asian mothers. Hispanic mothers and fathers also held more college degrees than their black counterparts but the differences were less dramatic than those between blacks and caucasians.

Table 8.5 compares the number of dependent children and hours worked reported by each of the groups. Reflecting national statistics on financial aid eligibility, black students were somewhat less likely to be employed but the differences among groups were small. Asian students reported less than half-time employment more frequently than other groups. Overall, however, the relatively high percentages of students working half-time or more was consistent with the prevailing picture of the urban transfer student as a part-time working person.

Significantly more black students reported responsibility for dependent children and were more likely to have larger families, again a finding that was not surprising. Hispanics were the least likely to have responsibility for dependent children reflecting in part their age distribution. As noted previously, black students were significantly older than the other three groups. Examination of hours worked and dependent children by major and community college attended revealed some differences but none that could not be explained by the differences in racial characteristics already noted.

Differences in the patterns of financing college educations are revealed in Table 8.6. While all groups relied heavily on work and savings as would be expected from the number who reported being employed half-time or more, caucasian students were significantly less likely to report eligibility for financial assistance, the second most important source of funds for the other three groups. Asians, caucasians and Hispanics were much more likely to report assistance from parents or spouse; this category was the second most important source of assistance for caucasians.

As noted in Table 8. 6, black students made up some of the difference in lack of support from parents and spouses by their use of loans with 30 percent indicating this as a very important source. Hispanic and caucasian students made the least use of loans. Since these two groups were also the least likely to be eligible for financial assistance, they were substantially more dependent upon work and family support than their counterpart groups. The differences in patterns of support for these students generally corresponded to the differences in family structure and socioeconomic status reported in the literature.

Table 8.4 Parental Education By Race

Race	Elementary		Some H.S.		H.S. Graduate	
	Father	Mother	Father	Mother	Father	Mother
Asian	13	11	20	37	7	10
Blacks	29	18	19	27	25	25
Hispanics	30	28	15	17	15	25
Caucasians	12	8	12	13	27	36
Total	19	14	15	19	25	30

	Some College		Bacc. Degree		Some Graduate	
	Father	Mother	Father	Mother	Father	Mother
Asian	23	7	7	10	30	23
Blacks	19	21	6	6	2	4
Hispanics	19	17	11	6	9	8
Caucasians	22	29	15	8	11	6
Total	21	24	11	7	9	6

Note. All figures in percentages.

Table 8.5 Hours Worked and Dependent Children by Race

Race	Hours Worked Per Week			Responsibility for Dependent Children		
	Ø	≤ 20	> 20-	%	% Having 1-2 Children	% Having 3 or more Children
	%	%	%			
Asian	13	27	60	23	20	3
Black	20	9	89	42	33	10
Hispanic	15	4	77	17	17	Ø
Caucasian	16	12	70	22	19	4
Total	18	11	69	28	24	5

Table 8.6 Financial Resources by Race

Race	Very Imp	Some Imp	Not Imp	Not Avail	Very Imp	Some Imp	Not Imp	Not Avail	Very Imp	Some Imp	Not Imp	Not Avail
	Work/Savings				Financial Aid				Loans			
Asian	67	23	7	3	60	17	3	17	20	33	13	30
Black	73	10	1	10	56	7	6	22	30	18	15	25
Hispanic	77	8	2	11	47	13	9	26	30	8	32	24
Caucasian	76	13	5	5	24	8	22	41	22	12	32	28
Total	74	13	4	8	38	9	14	32	25	15	25	27
	Parents/Spouse				Veterans Benefits							
Asian	47	20	10	23	3	Ø	13	77				
Black	24	9	16	41	9	2	13	59				
Hispanic	34	17	13	28	8	2	19	62				
Caucasian	38	19	19	20	4	1	18	69				
Total	35	16	17	27	6	2	16	66				

Note. All figures in percentages.

Evaluation of Preparation for University Work

Transfer students were asked to report how they rated their preparation for university work by schools and colleges they had previously attended. We anticipated that minority students attending inner city school systems would be more likely to find fault with their previous preparation. The results, displayed in Table 8.7, failed to support this hypothesis. Black students were as positive or more so than their caucasian and Hispanic counterparts across the board (allowing for sampling error). Asian students presented a very different profile by reporting their strongest preparation was in math and science, areas where the other groups felt the least well prepared. An examination of the same information arrayed by community college indicated that students attending community colleges enrolling the largest proportions of minority students were the most positive about their public school preparation. With one exception, ten percent or fewer of the students attending predominantly minority community colleges reported poor public school preparation. The one exception was the community college with the greatest discrepancy between percentages of minority students in attendance and those in the sample of transfer students. This same college transferred the highest percentage of students in math and science.

While acknowledging the limitations of our data, it seems, nonetheless, useful to suggest that a part of the satisfaction minority students reported with their public school preparation may have been a function of the extent to which the community colleges they attended adjusted their expectations to the preparation of the students they received. The literature and our observations provide substantial evidence in support of this hypothesis. At the same time it does not seem appropriate to rule out the possibility that some urban students somehow succeed in obtaining better elementary and high school educations than the prevailing judgments about their systems would suggest as possible. Both possibilities deserve further exploration.

The satisfaction with public school preparation for university work also holds for preparation by the community college. Because of differences in the way the questions were worded, only the areas of reading and writing were directly comparable. Comparing Table 8.7 with Table 8.8 shows that community colleges held a slight edge in writing while public schools were given better marks for preparation in reading reflecting, probably as much as anything, differences in curricular emphasis. But the percentage of students reporting poor preparation in either setting was very small. While blacks were the most positive about their public school experience, Hispanics were the most positive about the community college, although differences between the two groups were for the most part small. Asians ranked their preparation in reading and writing at the community college significantly higher than in the public schools. Overall caucasians and Asians were the most critical of their community college preparation reflecting perhaps their greater propensity for entering math and science related fields, areas which do not seem to be a strength for most urban community colleges. But perhaps the most important information to be derived from Table 8.8, as was true for Table 8.7, is the strong endorsement by all groups for the preparation they received prior to entering the university.

Table 8.7 Preparation by Elementary and Secondary Schools by Race

Race	Well	Fair	Poor	Well	Fair	Poor	Well	Fair	Poor
	Read			Write			Speak		
Asian	27	50	23	27	47	27	27	47	27
Black	64	27	7	45	36	16	48	35	15
Hispanic	49	34	17	49	26	25	47	28	25
Caucasian	61	29	11	44	36	19	35	36	28
Total	59	30	11	44	36	19	39	36	24
	Math			Science			Social Studies		
Asian	70	27	3	57	40	3	27	50	23
Black	41	40	18	36	51	12	49	43	7
Hispanic	43	39	21	32	55	13	47	43	9
Caucasian	36	36	28	38	40	21	46	42	12
Total	40	35	24	38	45	17	45	44	11

Note. All figures in percentages.

Table 8.8 Preparation by Community College for University Experience by Race

Race	Well	Fair	Poor	No Need	Well	Fair	Poor	No Need	Well	Fair	Poor	No Need	Well	Fair	Poor	No Need
	Writing				Computer Use				Reading				Examinations			
Asian	20	67	10	3	30	37	20	10	43	43	13	Ø	33	63	3	Ø
Black	41	46	11	2	15	20	22	40	49	43	7	Ø	44	46	10	Ø
Hispanic	43	45	9	2	21	26	13	38	40	55	6	Ø	38	47	15	Ø
Caucasian	36	44	12	6	13	19	22	39	33	51	10	3	32	50	15	1
Total	38	46	11	4	16	21	21	37	39	49	9	1	36	50	13	.4

	Taking Notes				Discussion				Laboratory			
Asian	33	53	13	Ø	27	57	17	Ø	30	40	27	3
Black	45	44	10	Ø	50	44	6	Ø	33	32	11	24
Hispanic	51	42	8	Ø	45	51	4	Ø	17	43	9	30
Caucasian	43	44	10	<1	37	51	9	2	21	32	14	29
Total	43	45	10	.4	41	49	8	1	24	33	14	26

Note. All figures in percentages.

A review of the same data arrayed by community college produced few surprises but some insight into the complexities involved in interpreting surveys. In one instance two samples from the same predominantly minority community college were surveyed because the college sent a significant number of transfers to two different universities, one a research institution and the other a predominantly minority comprehensive university. While both samples were positive about their previous preparation, those attending the research university were much more critical of their community college preparation in every area except examinations. This observation again supports the notion that judgments about preparation are related in an important way to the expectations of the receiving institution. From this data it would be difficult to conclude that the differences in rigor and standards between community colleges and universities are nearly as great as university faculty believe.

Above average ratings were received most consistently by community colleges enrolling the highest proportions of black and Hispanic students reflecting the tendency for both of these groups to view their previous educational experiences in an extremely positive light. But in the aggregate, few urban students in the samples believed their community college preparation had been anything other than very good or fair. Students were the most critical of their preparation in math and sciences, a criticism reflected in self-reported grades at the university; these are considered in the next section of this report.

The Transfer Experience

A series of questions solicited information about timing of the decision to transfer, elements influencing the transfer decision, use of community college and university resources in transferring, the match between community college and university courses, credits lost during transfer and first term success in the university.

As indicated in Table 8.9, black students, who were on the average older than other racial groups, were the last to decide about transferring. More than 1 in 5 decided to transfer after leaving the community college. Only 31 percent made that decision before arriving at a community college. In marked contrast, nearly one-half of the Hispanic and caucasian students knew they were going on to the university before reaching the community college. Asians resembled blacks in terms of the relatively small percentages who planned to transfer before attending a community college but significantly more made their decision while in attendance, leaving less than 1 in 10 who made the decision after leaving.

Students who transferred in the areas of engineering, business and mathematics were the most likely to have made early decisions and somewhat surprisingly, so were social science majors. More predictable were education majors with the highest percentage deciding after community college (29) and the lowest percentage deciding before (29), figures that do not alter the prevailing judgment education as a profession of last resort. Almost without exception, the higher the proportion of minority students attending a

Table 8.9 Timing of Decision to Transfer by Race

Race	Before C.C.	During C.C.	After C.C.
Asian	32	55	10
Black	31	43	22
Hispanic	47	34	19
Caucasian	46	39	13
Total	40	41	16

Note. All figures in percentages.

community college, the later the decision to transfer; this underscores the importance of early identification and advising for these institutions.

Table 8.10 provides information about the influence of a range of variables commonly believed to be related to a student's decision to transfer. Most interesting are those variables having the least influence. After athletic recruitment which constituted an important influence for a negligible number of students, and social activities, reflecting the part-time, working nature of these transfers, the three least important influences in order were community college teachers, community college counselors and university representatives. These results corroborate the interview data which suggested that faculty advising and counseling for transfer students was either of relatively poor quality or non-existent. Similarly, there was substantial evidence from the interviews that universities neglected students in community colleges in favor of concentrating their recruiting efforts on recent high school graduates.

The most important influences by contrast had little or nothing to do with community college or university practices designed to facilitate transfer. Available programs and academic reputation were the most important. Three very practical considerations; close to home, low tuition, and perceived relationship to career objectives (helpful in getting a job); were next in importance. These were followed closely by credit hours accepted, advice of a friend and family or job responsibilities. The one institutional practice, credit hours accepted, identified in the survey as an important influence on transfer decisions constitutes from the interview data a barrier rather than a facilitator of transfer.

The pattern for all racial groups was essentially similar but several variations were worth noting. Caucasians were significantly less likely to be influenced by community college counselors and teachers or university representatives. This may reflect greater self-sufficiency, but, given very similar family backgrounds in terms of college experience, it seems more likely that the difference reflects the greater number of special programs at both community colleges and universities for which minority students are eligible. This same factor seems to be operating in the differences reported for financial aid as an influence on transfer. The high task orientation of Asian students is reflected in their responses both to the item on credit hours accepted and the importance of a good job.

An examination of the data from Table 8.10 arrayed by community college revealed wide variation among institutions. The percentage reporting that community college counselors and teachers were not an important influence on transfer ranged from 41 to 88. With only minor exceptions, students gave almost identical responses for faculty and counselors. Put differently, if counselors were not important to the transfer decision in a college, neither were faculty. The similarity of these responses suggest the influence of institutional policies. The community colleges where counselors and faculty were most likely to be an important influence were those serving higher proportions of minority students and having minority leadership. The same pattern was true for university representatives. The difference was particularly dramatic in the two samples who transferred from one community college eigher to a research university or to a predominantly minority comprehensive university. The group going to the research university were

Table 8.10 Important Influences on Decision to Transfer by Race

Race	Very Imp	Some Imp	Not Imp	Very Imp	Some Imp	Not Imp	Very Imp	Some Imp	Not Imp	Very Imp	Some Imp	Not Imp	Very Imp	Some Imp	Not Imp
	Advice of CC Teacher			Advice of CC Counselor			Advice of Friend or Relative			Number of Credit Hours Accepted			Close to Home		
Asian	23	26	48	19	32	45	39	39	16	68	19	10	36	36	26
Black	21	20	55	17	26	52	26	39	33	42	27	24	54	25	17
Hispanic	25	26	47	23	28	47	34	34	30	40	36	24	47	42	9
Caucasian	11	18	69	6	22	70	28	34	35	34	30	35	56	27	16
Total (592)	16	20	61	12	25	60	29	36	33	39	29	29	53	28	17
	University has Good Academic Reputation			Program Available			Financial Assistance			University Representative			Athletic Recruitment		
Asian	58	36	3	68	26	3	36	36	26	19	42	36	Ø	26	71
Black	56	34	5	76	15	6	43	24	27	22	31	42	<1	2	89
Hispanic	62	28	8	70	25	6	38	26	34	15	34	47	2	11	81
Caucasian	55	36	8	75	19	6	17	17	63	9	21	67	1	2	93
Total	56	35	7	75	18	5	29	21	46	14	26	56	1	5	89
	Social Activities			Low Tuition			Family or Job Responsibilities			University Grads Get Good Jobs			Good Grad Schools		
Asian	10	36	52	46	42	13	48	26	23	48	42	6	55	32	10
Black	4	18	71	49	28	19	47	15	34	40	39	17	44	33	18
Hispanic	6	21	74	60	23	15	53	25	21	32	49	19	32	47	21
Caucasian	3	11	82	46	32	20	50	20	29	30	40	27	24	37	35
Total	4	16	76	48	31	19	49	19	29	34	41	21	32	37	27

Note. All figures in percentages.

significantly less likely to attach importance to the influence of a university representative. Even with this difference, the research university was still rated above average in the importance attributed to the influence of a university representative. This research university had a very vigorous outreach effort through the minority leader of a special program who had previously worked in a community college and made recruitment from these institutions her priority. The percentage of students attributing no importance to the influence of a university representative ranged from 35 to 75. Part of the variation clearly was a function of racial composition but differences in university practices appeared to influence the results as well.

Finally, the data from Table 8.10 were examined by student major. The results were generally predictable from information about the field and the racial composition of those who transferred into it. For example, number of credit hours accepted was most important to students in allied health where the most difficult articulation issues were generally found.

Community colleges and universities provide a variety of resources to assist students in the transfer process. An evaluation of the usefulness of these services for community colleges is provided in Table 8.11. The college catalog for all groups was by far the most widely used source of assistance and the most useful. Other resources used by more than half of the transfers included in order of use: teachers, counselors, transfer guides, friends who transferred and the registrar's office. Asian students were the most likely to use all of these resources except for counselors and the registrar's office which were used most frequently by Hispanics and blacks. Caucasian students were significantly less likely to use all resources than were other groups.

Only 10 percent of the students found orientation sessions very useful and 64 percent reported either they were not used or were not useful. The rating for this service as well as those for honors programs and special programs reflect as much as anything their absence in most of these community colleges except where offered for a very limited clientele. The ratings in general, do not reflect a heavy emphasis within community colleges upon helping students to transfer. The help can be found by those who seek it but the most common source of assistance was the college catalog.

Similar information on university sources of assistance to transfer students is reported in Table 8.12. Again, the pattern suggests little systematic assistance. The most frequently used resources in order of use were the university catalog, the admissions office, a visit to the university, academic departments and university publications other than the catalog. Asians and blacks were the most likely to use university resources while caucasians were the least likely. The patterns of use for resources such as visits to the university, orientation sessions, and special programs reflect the emphasis placed in many universities on the recruitment of minority students, but the relatively small percentage reporting contact with a university representative (34) reinforces impressions from the interview data that most students were required to negotiate the transfer process without much assistance other than routinely available publications or offices serving the general public.

Sources of assistance provided by both community colleges and universities can be compared in terms of their usefulness to these students although

Table 8.11 Students' Evaluation of Community College Sources of Assistance by Race

Race	Usefulness Very	Some	Not	Usefulness Very	Some	Not	Usefulness Very	Some	Not	Usefulness Very	Some	Not	Usefulness Very	Some	Not
	Counseling			Teachers			Orientation Sessions			Registrar's Office			Financial Aid Office		
Asian	26	48	23	32	42	23	13	45	39	23	42	32	19	32	42
Black	27	34	36	30	35	33	19	26	53	24	34	39	29	22	47
Hispanic	32	47	21	34	34	32	19	32	47	26	43	28	21	23	57
Caucasian	19	31	48	20	35	43	4	18	77	8	37	54	7	12	80
Total	23	34	41	25	36	38	10	23	64	15	36	46	16	17	65
	Transfer Guides			College Catalog			Special Programs for Transfers			Friends Who Transferred			Honors Program		
Asian	58	26	13	61	29	6	16	45	32	45	45	6	16	36	45
Black	25	33	37	51	26	18	20	16	61	33	27	37	6	18	71
Hispanic	28	40	32	42	42	15	11	25	62	36	45	19	15	23	62
Caucasian	25	31	41	38	39	22	10	12	76	23	28	47	3	7	88
Total	27	32	37	43	35	19	14	17	67	29	30	39	6	14	78

Note. All figures in percentages.

Table 8.12 Students' Evaluation of University Sources of Assistance by Race

Race	Usefulness Admissions Office			Usefulness Teachers			Usefulness Orientation Sessions			Usefulness University Representatives			Usefulness Athletic Representatives		
	Very	Some	Not	Very	Some	Not	Very	Some	Not	Very	Some	Not	Very	Some	Not
Asian	32	48	6	26	36	37	26	42	29	10	58	26	3	26	64
Black	41	37	13	18	25	54	26	25	46	15	26	55	2	8	86
Hispanic	45	38	11	26	25	47	13	34	53	9	32	57	8	17	75
Caucasian	24	48	25	11	22	64	10	16	72	7	19	73	7	19	73
Total	32	44	18	16	24	57	16	23	59	10	24	63	2	7	88

	Visit to University			Financial Aid			University Catalog			Other University Publications			Academic Departments		
	Very	Some	Not	Very	Some	Not	Very	Some	Not	Very	Some	Not	Very	Some	Not
Asian	36	48	13	26	39	32	52	42	3	16	55	26	26	36	36
Black	35	34	28	37	22	38	58	31	9	27	33	35	29	34	31
Hispanic	30	49	21	26	26	37	57	38	6	21	51	28	28	40	32
Caucasian	19	35	44	8	17	73	46	39	13	13	36	49	20	30	50
Total	26	36	36	20	22	56	51	36	11	18	37	42	24	33	41

	Special Programs for Transfers			Special Programs		
	Very	Some	Not	Very	Some	Not
Asian	16	32	48	13	29	52
Black	20	19	58	16	12	68
Hispanic	15	19	66	13	21	64
Caucasian	8	15	76	5	8	85
Total	13	17	68	10	12	76

caution must be used in interpreting the results, since the same resource may impact on the transfer process differently depending upon where it was experienced. Community college faculty were consulted in the transfer process almost twice as often as university faculty and twice as many students found their assistance very useful. In contrast, university orientation sessions and their catalog were more frequently used and were rated as very useful more frequently. Community college financial aid offices were more frequently used and gave somewhat better satisfaction than their university counterparts. Other differences in directly comparable forms of assistance appeared inconsequential.

Student responses varied by participating community college in ways suggested by the interview data. Where universities had developed special orientation sessions for transfers more students reported using them and a higher percentage found them very useful. Differences by field tended to reflect the racial distributions of transfer students majoring in those fields and were generally quite small.

Most of those in all four racial groups reported that the courses completed in their community colleges had been selected with a specific university degree in mind. Caucasians were the least likely to have done so and Asians the most likely, as indicated in Table 8.13. Among all groups,three out of every four indicated their community college courses related to the degree they were pursuing at the university. An examination of differences arrayed by community college and by major field produced minor variations on the pattern described above. From these responses it would appear that successful transfers disproportionately pursued university degrees closely related to the courses they took at a community college. The relationship seemed to hold even for groups who made late transfer decisions.

Table 8.14 provides information about the loss of credit during transfer. Overall, about 4 in 10 students reported no loss of credit. But among those reporting loss of credit, the impact was felt disproportionately by blacks where nearly 3 of every 4 students lost some credit. Even though caucasians, as noted in Table 8.13, were the most likely to report a difference between courses taken in the community college and university degree intentions, they were the least likely to report a loss of credit during transfer with almost half reporting no loss. Blacks who lost the most credit, as previously noted, were the last to decide about transfer.

A significant majority of all groups except Asians reported that they held the associate degree at the time of transfer; this is a somewhat surprising result given the lack of emphasis placed on the degree in several states and the tendency for community colleges to design their programs around the needs of part-time students not interested in earning degrees. The lower percentage of Asians earning the associate degree can be explained by the fields they frequent. It was rare for community colleges participating in this study to offer appropriate degree programs in engineering, math and the sciences. Even where such programs were available, the small number of prepared students pursuing them frequently found inconvenient class schedules which encouraged early transfer.

The loss of credit in the second or departmental evaluation of the students' transcripts was much less of a problem for these respondents than

Table 8.13 Community College Courses and University Degree Objectives by Race

Race	% Selecting CC Courses for Degree Presently Enrolled
Asian	87
Black	77
Hispanic	79
Caucasian	69
Total (592)	73

suggested from the interview data previously reported. Still, one in every four students reported an additional loss with slightly higher losses among Asian students who were least likely to earn degrees and hence more likely to have to undergo a credit by credit evaluation of their transcripts.

Only 1 student in 4 reported a class status below the junior level reflecting both the number who transferred with degrees and the high risk status of those who transferred without completing a substantial part of their lower division work. A review of the data from Table 8.14 arrayed by participating community college provided insight into some of the ambiguity surrounding the meaning of the associate degree. The number reporting an earned associate degree varied according to the articulation policies of the state where a community college was located. In one state where formal policies emphasized the associate degree as a transfer credential, 98 percent of the students transferring from a community college held that degree. In another state where little or no emphasis was placed on the degree, 23 percent reported earning it.

Unfortunately, there appeared to be little relationship between holding the degree and loss of credits. In the state where 98 percent transferred with the degree, 58 percent reported no loss of credit while in the state with 23 percent, 60 percent reported no loss of credit. The survey data corroborates and extends some of the theses reported in the preceding chapter. In cities where the poorest relationships between universities and corresponding community colleges were observed during the site visits, 3 out of every 4 students reported some loss of credit. Among institutions where the best relationships were observed, the number was slightly more than one-half. However, these observations have to be qualified. One case of poor relationships occurred in a state with exceptionally strong and formal articulation policies and in that setting, despite differences between institutions, less than half of the students reported loss of credit. So relationships are important but so are state policies and the latter seem able to compensate in some degree for an absence of the former.

While there were some relationships between race and loss of credit, the more important variables in this part of the transfer equation appeared to be institutional relationships and state policy. Interventions aimed at improving relationships and policies appear to have the potential for improving minority achievement but seem valuable for all racial groups.

As a final question bearing on the transfer process, we asked students to report the grades they earned following transfer. The results appear in Table 8.15. More than 3 out of every 4 transfers reported passing all courses the first semester after transfer. Among the racial groups, Hispanics were the least likely to report passing all courses and caucasians the most, but the differences were relatively small. A majority of all groups reported their community college performance in the "B" range with blacks significantly more likely to have been "C" students.

After transfer, blacks were the least likely to report earning lower grades in the university. The pattern for all racial groups was, however, essentially the same. A relatively small percentage, in no case more than 15, reported an increased grade point average. A much higher percentage of each group, ranging from 33 to 42 reported lower university grades. Asian students

Table 8.14 Degree Status, Class Standing and Loss of Credit by Race

Race	Holding Associate Degree at Time of Transfer	Credit Loss During Transfer			Additional Loss: Credits Not Counted Toward the Baccalaureate Degree			Class Status			
		No Loss	1-10 Credits	Range of Loss	No Loss	1-10 Credits	Range of Loss	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sr.
Asian	32	35	21	3-40	69	14	3-23	Ø	19	48	29
Black	61	27	34	2-79	76	14	2-51	7	18	47	24
Hispanic	76	47	31	2-49	78	12	2-70	6	13	66	11
Caucasian	48	42	29	1-81	73	14	3-65	7	19	46	26
Total	54	42	29	1-81	75	14	2-70	6	18	48	24

Note. All figures in percentages.

Table 8.15 Self Reported Success After Transferring by Race

Race	Passing All Credits	Community College Grades			University Grades Compared to C.C.			
	First Term	A	B	C	Higher	Same	Lower	Term Incomplete
Asian	72	13	71	13	3	55	42	Ø
Black	70	14	55	28	15	45	33	4
Hispanic	67	19	62	19	6	51	36	8
Caucasian	78	29	54	16	10	43	40	5
Total	74	22	56	20	11	44	37	5

Note. All figures in percentages.

who entered the science fields in disproportionate numbers, reported the greatest discrepancy between community college grades and those earned in the university. Blacks who tended to enter non-science fields disproportionately, reported the least discrepancy. The data, while self reported, generally were consistent with the results expected from the literature and the unpublished studies of participating universities. Black student reports of least loss of grade point average reflected their lower grades before transferring, the fields they enter, and the significant number of those involved who transferred to universities with a predominantly minority student body. Most interesting, however, are the similarities rather than the differences among all four racial groups after transfer. Elsewhere, we have noted that minority transfer students do not perform in ways significantly different from other transfer students, an observation that these data support.

When examining the transfer process from the perspective of timing of the decision, influences on the student, course patterns, loss of credit and performance, it was clear there were variations among racial groups that did impact on the process. The tendency for black students to make later decisions influenced the number of credits they lost. But the more interesting variations were those produced by institutional practice and state policies. Most community colleges and universities failed to reach a majority of those who transferred with direct and useful contacts from professionals. Loss of credit was most importantly a function of state policies and institutional relationships and not race. Clearly, there are opportunities for institutional and state interventions that would improve effectiveness in this area.

Evaluating Instructors, Courses and Services

A central theme of this report has been the differing cultures of the community college and university and the implications for institutional practices. If our thesis is correct we should expect that student perceptions of the environments of the two types of institutions would reflect these value differences. To address the question of differences in institutional pratices and the implications of such differences, we asked transfer students to compare faculty members, course offerings, and support services in the community college where they began their education and in the university they were currently attending.

Table 8.16 provides information about transfer students' assessment of community college and university faculty along six dimensions. A majority of the students saw no difference between community college and university faculty in terms of knowledge of subject matter and organization. Those perceiving differences along these dimensions gave the edge to university faculty. Differences were most pronounced for Asian students who majored predominantly in math and science related areas. Also interesting were the perceptions of black students who were far more likely to perceive university instructors superior on both of these dimensions. Hispanic students by contrast were somewhat more likely to see community college instructors as better organized.

The community college has long prided itself on being a teaching institution. In our interviews, faculty members in community colleges often

Table 8.16 Comparison of Community College and University Faculty by Race

Race	CC	Same	U	N.B.	CC	Same	U	N.B.	CC	Same	U	N.B.
	Knowledge				Organization				Capability to Teach			
Asian	19	32	48	Ø	10	48	42	Ø	26	39	32	3
Black	12	54	29	3	11	53	30	3	25	47	24	3
Hispanic	11	70	19	Ø	25	60	13	2	36	57	6	2
Caucasian	8	65	23	2	20	58	19	2	35	51	11	1
Total	10	59	27	3	17	55	23	3	32	49	16	2
	Openness				Availability				Helpfulness with Career			
Asian	32	45	19	Ø	36	48	16	Ø	10	36	42	13
Black	30	51	11	5	35	42	16	5	33	29	20	17
Hispanic	34	42	17	8	42	40	15	4	28	34	15	23
Caucasian	46	40	8	5	45	36	12	6	29	29	19	22
Total	39	43	11	6	41	39	14	5	28	31	20	19

Note. All figures in percentages. CC = Community College Better; U = University Better; NB = No basis for comparison.

criticized such university practices as the use of graduate students to teach lower division math and English courses. Overall for the 50 percent of the students who perceived a difference, 2 out of 3 thought the community college teachers did a better job. But this edge in favor of community college teachers was a function of the perceptions of caucasian and Hispanic students; blacks and Asians saw no significant differences. An examination of this same data arrayed by major field revealed that community college teaching in physical sciences, computer sciences, mathematics and biological sciences held the widest margin over university teaching. Social science was the only field where university faculty were perceived to do a better job of teaching. While institutional differences were generally inconclusive, the university where faculty members held the widest margin over their community college counterparts in terms of better ratings of teaching practice was a predominantly minority comprehensive institution dedicated to a teaching mission.

Students reported the greatest differences between community college and university faculty in terms of openness to student ideas, availability, and helpfulness with career plans. In the first two areas, community college instructors held more than a 3 to 1 advantage, reflecting the supportive environment of the community college we have described elsewhere in considerable detail. The results were much closer for helpfulness with career; this may have been an artifact of the greater concentration on the major that occurs in the upper division. But even for this area, all groups except Asians found community college instructors more helpful. The patterns for all racial groups except Asians on the career question were very similar suggesting that experiences with faculty members do not vary a great deal although the impact may. Differences by institution and discipline revealed no interpretable trends.

Student comparisons of course offerings in the community college and university setting are reported in Table 8.17. Community college courses were more likely to be offered at convenient hours and to be available in the major field. All groups except blacks found registration easier at the community college. The somewhat surprising edge given by black students to registration procedures in the university may reflect the emphasis on recruiting black students and the special provisions for registering them found in many of the participating universities. All groups except Asians gave community colleges their widest margin in the area of course availability reflecting the comunity college orientation toward the part-time and evening student. This difference suggests one problem area for transfer students who must adjust to universities that remain oriented toward students who attend during the day. Asian students were the only group reporting greater convenience and availability in the university. This perception seems related to their tendency to major in math and hard science where we found few advanced courses available among particpating inner city colleges.

In marked contrast to responses about convenience and availability, universities by a wide margin were reported to have courses more relevant to student goals and at more appropriate levels of difficulty. Greater relevance to student goals follows from the organization of the baccalaureate where lower division work emphasizes general education and specialization occurs primarily during the junior and senior years. Our interview data corroborated the widespread faculty perceptions of greater rigor in university courses. Interestingly, many students also perceived a difference and by substantial

Table 8.17 Comparison of Community College and University Courses by Race

Race	CC	Same	U	N.B.	CC	Same	U	N.B.	CC	Same	U	N.B.
	Convenient Hours				Availability of Required Courses				Ease of Registering			
Asian	19	32	42	6	19	32	42	6	26	45	26	3
Black	34	45	15	1	34	40	21	2	19	42	31	4
Hispanic	47	47	4	2	49	34	15	2	47	36	15	2
Caucasian	36	46	15	<1	34	42	20	2	42	37	17	3
Total	35	45	16	2	35	40	21	2	34	39	22	3

	Relevance to Goals				Appropriate Difficulty			
Asian	16	32	48	3	10	42	36	13
Black	8	41	42	5	5	49	33	8
Hispanic	9	55	25	11	11	43	34	9
Caucasian	6	41	45	6	7	45	43	3
Total	8	42	41	6	7	45	39	6

Note. All figures in percentages. CC = Community College Better; U = University Better; NB = No basis for comparison.

margins endorsed the demands required by university courses. A substantial number of students however reported no difference in level of difficulty.

An examination of the data by community college revealed no consistent trends for inner city colleges as distinct from their more suburban counterparts. The percentage of students reporting level of difficulty more appropriate at the university ranged from 26 to 73. Interestingly, the low and high percentages were from the same community college and involved two samples of students, one that transferred to a predominantly minority, comprehensive university (26), and the other to a research university (73). Students attending the institution with the reputation for greater rigor were nearly 3 times as likely to report the level of difficulty as more appropriate in the university. Of the remaining community colleges where above average proportions of students reported university courses offered a more appropriate level of difficulty, two were inner city and enrolled high proportions of minority students while the third was a predominantly suburban college with fewer than 20 percent minority students. There was a relationship between curricular emphasis in the community colleges and perceptions that university courses were at a more appropriate level of difficulty. Those institutions transferring higher proportions of students into engineering, math and the sciences were the most likely to perceive university courses as having the more appropriate rigor.

There were also significant differences among institutions on ease of registration. At one extreme, 11 percent of the students said registration was easier at the community college and 57 percent at the university. At the other extreme, the figures were almost reversed with 42 percent indicating registration was easier at the community college and 11 percent at the university. Again, there were no consistent patterns for urban versus less urban colleges suggesting that the fluctuation observed was primarily a function of institutional practice.

Table 8.18 provides information about comparisons among support services. In four areas students reported that universities provided better services than community colleges. Predictably these areas included the library, social events, cultural events and student center. With very modest variations these differences were consistent for all racial groups. They were also consistent for all community colleges although some clearly did a better job in these areas than others.

In three other areas, admissions, tutoring, and counseling, community colleges were given a slight edge but the differences were not consistent across racial groups. Caucasians and Hispanics favored the services in comunity colleges but Asians and blacks either perceived these to be better in the university or saw little difference. Looking at the same information by community college indicated that most of the students who reported tutoring was better in the community college were concentrated in three institutions. In the remaining community colleges, students reported little difference or favored tutoring services in the university. A similar if not so dramatic distribution was characteristic of counseling services with a preponderance of the votes favoring community colleges occurring in two institutions. But there was no overlap between the two sets of evaluations. That is, community colleges with the most strongly rated tutoring services were not the ones that received the highest marks on counseling services.

Table 8.18 Comparison of Community College and University Support Services by Race

Race	CC	Same	U	N.B.	CC	Same	U	N.B.	CC	Same	U	N.B.
	Admissions Procedures				Financial Assistance				New Student Orientation			
Asian	13	48	32	6	13	58	26	3	3	48	39	10
Black	21	42	31	4	13	35	23	25	9	39	26	22
Hispanic	36	47	13	4	11	32	13	42	19	34	11	34
Caucasian	35	41	20	3	9	23	11	55	11	25	18	44
Total	29	41	24	4	10	30	16	41	11	32	22	34
	Counseling				Tutoring				Library			
Asian	29	39	26	6	26	29	29	13	10	23	68	Ø
Black	21	35	25	14	26	23	23	21	5	31	57	5
Hispanic	23	45	15	17	19	36	9	36	8	28	55	6
Caucasian	22	31	20	25	20	20	13	44	7	20	62	8
Total	22	34	22	20	22	23	17	34	7	25	60	6
	Student Center				Cultural Opportunities				Social Events			
Asian	3	29	58	10	7	39	39	16	10	32	52	6
Black	6	26	37	27	13	27	36	20	11	28	35	22
Hispanic	4	34	28	32	9	26	34	28	8	19	49	25
Caucasian	8	19	39	32	5	17	36	40	6	16	39	37
Total	7	23	38	30	8	23	35	31	8	21	39	30

Note: All figures in percentages. CC=Community College Better; U=University Better; NB=No basis for comparison

Students rated admission services better in most community colleges, but in four, they were rated better at the university, sometimes by fairly startling margins; 49 percent to 9 percent in one instance and 55 to 18 in another. Again there seemed to be no consistent patterns among institutions so that those community colleges given high ratings in one area did not necessarily receive them in others. In one instance, a community college that received strong ratings for counseling services was rated as having poorer admissions services than its adjacent university.

In two other service areas, orientation for new students and financial assistance, universities were reported as having better services overall but the differences were much less than for library, student center, cultural opportunities and social events. In the area of orientation, a significant number reported no basis for comparison. Given the small number of transfer students who participate in orientation, the category of "same" should probably also be interpreted as lacking evidence to make a choice. But among those students who did provide a rating, university orientation was the choice of all groups except Hispanics. The same general observation applied to financial assistance although here the differences were much smaller and fewer students reported a basis for comparison.

The differences among community colleges on these two variables were worth noting. Despite the overall observations described above, financial aid services were described as better than the university for one community college and equal in a second. In one of the two, student orientation was also perceived to be better but this same institution was not among the stronger community colleges in terms of tutoring or counseling. It did get a very strong rating on admissions. But there appeared to be little if any correlation between having one service rated as better than a university and having other services similarly rated.

The information provided in Tables 8.16-8.18 appears somewhat equivocal in terms of any assessment that community colleges uniformly and systematically provide a more supportive environment than the universities. There was evidence that community college faculty members were more available to students and more open to their ideas. Community college scheduling practices seemed better attuned to the needs and schedules of part-time commuting students. Community colleges appeared more accommodating in admission practices and slightly more likely to provide tutoring services. But most of the responses favoring community colleges in these areas were concentrated in a relatively small number of programs scattered almost randomly across the participating community colleges. Absent was evidence of any systematic, across the board emphasis to make environments more supportive for urban, baccalaureate oriented students. While the same may be said of the participating universities, the latter have at least the virtue of never having claimed anything different.

Of course surveys deal with student perceptions and many students saw no differences between universities and community colleges on many of these variables. But at the very least it is clear the results make no compelling case for claims to superiority by community colleges in helping students achieve the baccalaureate degree. The comments reported in the next section

of this chapter do suggest that community colleges are perceived to be more student oriented and more concerned about students as individuals.

Student Comments

To be certain our study did not overlook the group most affected by our findings, we administered the survey described earlier in this chapter. While we consulted with institutional representatives and studied the literature in designing the survey, the fixed response items still represented our construction of reality rather than one supplied by students. To compensate in part for the limitations of this approach, we provided an open ended question in which we asked students what they thought about the transfer process and the improvements that would have made that process work better for them.

In the final section of this chapter, we use the students' own words to provide their reactions to the community college and the university they attended, and to identify the changes they believe would have helped them in making a smoother transition. Their comments and advice have been organized into four sections. In the first, comments are presented that seem to hold implications for state coordinating boards. A second section deals with student perceptions of what we have described as conflicting cultures. A third section contains comments and advice specific to community colleges, and the final section provides the same information with respect to universities.

Before moving to these sections, we should note that 35 percent of those returning usable surveys chose not to respond to the optional open response item. An additional 8 percent provided positive comments about the transfer experience. So overall, as suggested in Chapter 7, the transfer process works and probably works well for close to half of those who experience it. But that still leaves more than half that think the process could be improved and we believe that minority students, are disproportionately concentrated in the half that could benefit from the improvements suggested. Of course, such improvements would benefit all students but the least experienced and least well prepared would benefit the most.

There is a tendency to view the survivors of the transfer process whose perceptions are presented in this chapter as examples of the success of the system. The comment of one "successful" transfer provides insight into the battle that remains for many.

> The freedom I had at the community college is non-existant at the university. I feel lost and I feel like a loser; don't care how hard I try. I only get a "C"; this is frustrating to me. I'm on academic warning. This Spring quarter, is my last try. If I don't pass or do well, I'm going to wait until my kids can support themselves; then I will go back.

A less desparate comment from another student suggests the nature of the stress students experience that researchers sometimes call "transfer shock."

> I do not know if this applies to other people; I had a terrible time trying to get used to my new school. It was very difficult to get

> even a "B" grade during my first term. I thought I would not make it but after I spoke to some people about my problems, I found out that I was not different and by my second term, I improved. I got all "B"s and an "A" grade.

We were surprised both by the number of comments and by their length. Many students obviously felt strongly about the information they provided. In the sections that follow we present representative comments that express points of view that emerged as themes in our analysis of the comments.

State Coordinating Boards

While students did not perceive state coordinating boards as actors in the transfer equation process, we have placed into this category those comments that either dealt with policies frequently implemented at the coordinating board level or with advice that seemed not to be institution specific.

One common theme for students who attended institutions in cities where community colleges and universities maintained significantly different calendars was the problems created for transfer students by these differences. One student commented:

> One area where improvement is needed is the transitional process changing between semesters and quarters. Unfortunately, I cannot suggest any way to improve this situation.

From the student's perspective, there does not seem to be any way of minimizing the problems and confusion caused by these kinds of calendar differences existing within the same city. From the coordinating board perspective, however, mandating a common academic calendar was a practice found in several states.

Where institutions have different academic calendars, a major problem for transfer students involved the differing number of credits for which the same courses were offered. As one student noted:

> At the community college, each course is worth 3 points whereas at the university, they are 4 points. At the university you need 8 credits per field of study. Therefore, when transferring, even though the community college credits are accepted, you still may have to take an extra course to fulfill distribution requirements.

While this problem occasionally occurred because a community college, for whatever reasons, had chosen not to pattern its courses after those offered at the university, it was more common for the problem to exist where universities and community colleges operated on a different calendar.

A student in another city suggested that community college and university courses should be offered by the same department noting:

> The classes I took in my major at the community college wouldn't all transfer because at the community college the classes were in Home

> Economics and at the university they're in Education. So now I'm retaking classes (that have proven to be the same) at the university that I already took at the community college, causing me to have to go an extra year to get my bachelor's degree.

In yet a third city, a student commented on the same issue from a slightly different perspective.

> Let students know what credits are acceptable and what credits aren't. Many students take courses they don't need to transfer and end-up with 'credits in the air' as we call it. Nothing makes a student more upset than finding out that the credits they worked to earn at the community college aren't accepted at the university to which they wish to transfer.

As we have previously noted, neither community colleges nor universities were enthusiastic about following the Florida model which involves a standard academic calendar and a uniform course numbering system. But clearly, the problems these students identified are solvable and if institutions don't move to solve them, state coordinating boards may. Other student comments that focused on issues frequently considered by state coordinating boards included improved communication between the community college and the university, the need for residence halls, and the need of transfer students for financial aid. A student in a state where we had observed an absence of financial aid geared to the needs of transfer students commented:

> An effort should be made to aid older transfer and returning students in attaining financial aid. Most scholarships were geared to graduating high school students.

The problem of the older returning student was a theme that reappeared consistently throughout the comments. A student from a state that has implemented a rising junior examination had some observations about the impact of this examination on the older students.

> I feel that a student who graduated from a junior college over 14 years ago should not be made to take the entrance examination. I have not yet heard from the university on whether I have been admitted and I have already earned 18 credit hours there.

This statement was one of several that emphasized the problems such examinations create for students who completed their community college work before the curriculum included specific preparation for the examination.

A Clash of Cultures?

In Chapter 3 we suggested that the community college and the university constitute different cultures that the student must negotiate in pursuit of a baccalaureate degree. Do students perceive this difference in culture? The comments which follow leave little doubt about the issue.

One student offered this advice to a community college:

> Make the academic standards a little more strict at a junior college. The professor should be a little more distant, not so understanding. The academic shock from a warm, caring junior college to a cold, impersonal university is somewhat overwhelming. Junior colleges should not be a baby-sitting service for the community's elderly or youth. It should be up to university academic standards, which I personally don't feel they are. Too much pampering at a junior college.

Several students commented on what they perceive to be university attitudes.

> In many situations, students from community colleges are reluctant to attend the four-year institution simply because of the stigma associated with community colleges. They fear they are not prepared. I feel the four-year university should make an overt attempt to recruit students from neighboring community colleges with the same zest used to recruit incoming freshmen.

Then the student added:

> The four-year university should embrace the efforts of the community college and not belittle the product it produces.

Another student in a different state had a similar perception:

> Sometimes I get the feeling the community colleges are put-down when on the contrary they accomplish plenty.

Other students who commented on differences between the community college and the university offered comments that parallel many of the observations recorded in earlier chapters of this report. A student noted:

> The only problem in transferring was that the academic structure of the community college did not prepare me for the university system.

A student from a different community college had this advice:

> Students should be warned that classes at a university are much harder than classes at a junior college.

Where students commented on classes and teaching, they often praised the community college or criticized the university. One commented:

> Overall, the community colleges were greatly superior to the University courses because of the individual attention and help received, and the superior quality of the teachers at the community college level. Community college teachers are there to teach. The university teachers are there to do research instead of teaching.

Two students in the same community college offered complementary comments. The first noted:

> Probably the best part about a community college was the fact that the classrooms were small and there was more one-on-one instruction.

One of his colleagues said:

> I would like to see more personal attention given at the university like I received at the community college. Some professors at the university are not willing to teach. They are willing to tell people what they know. Half of my chemistry lecture class failed. That would never have happened at my community college.

Finally, a student who had experienced problems after transferring reported his perceptions of the differences between the community college he attended and the university he was currently attending:

> I was dismissed when I first transferred because I tried to do too much too soon. The community college stressed helping the student while the university leaves students on their own to sink or swim. They were two different worlds. The university does not give as much consideration to working students with families and other responsibilities. I really appreciated the community college using people who worked in a field to give a real world perspective to the classes. University professors seemed insulted at this approach. I (all of the students) have repeatedly been reminded THIS IS NOT A TECH SCHOOL!

Advice to Community Colleges

Students treated universities and community colleges with a fairly even-hand in recommending improvements. The largest single category of recommended improvements focused on counselors. A typical comment follows:

> Counselors at the community college didn't know which of their courses would transfer to the university. They and the community college catalog must stress the importance of talking with a university counselor also, or working with universities in helping with the selection of transferable courses. Many community college students are not aware that some of their courses won't transfer.

In a similar vein, another wrote:

> In my opinion, everything is working fine except for the credit hours at the community college; most of them are not transferable. I think the counselors at the community college should be aware of all the courses that are transferable and give the students more information about other universities, as well.

Yet another student reflected the confusion that results from getting different information from different people.

> I would suggest that both the community college and the university hire more counselors and train the ones they have better. One counselor says one thing, admissions says something else, and teachers will say something completely different. Sometimes I think they are after my money instead of helping with my education.

And perhaps responding to an emphasis on marketing, an older student in one college suggested:

> Community colleges need to expand their counseling services and place additional emphasis on identifying specific skills and interests of new students. The young students I encountered knew little about their true interests, were confused about their values, and were easily attracted to glamorous 'get through fast programs' thereby wasting precious time and money when those areas could easily have been identified by a competent counselor administering a variety of tests.

In the same school, a comment from a different student pointed out that a faculty advisor had prevented her from falling victim to bad advice from counselors.

> In my estimation, the counseling services between the community college and university could benefit from better communication. I was fortunate to have an advisor that kept current with the course changes in the transfer program. Not all students were this lucky and consequently, many wasted time taking courses that didn't transfer.

The comments criticizing counseling were much more common in some community colleges than others, suggesting that the problem of poor advice from counselors is not uniformly distributed.

A second area that received substantial emphasis in student comments involved the need for orientation and early information. One student observed:

> Transfer students should have at their disposal easy access to major university requirements, transfer procedures, and a list of what courses the university will accept or reject.

A student in a different university noted:

> Community college counselors should encourage incoming students to consider whether courses will or will not transfer even if the student does not intend to transfer at that time.

Interestingly, the Ford Foundation has provided grants to several community colleges that have implemented this strategy as one approach to improving transfer opportunities. Preliminary reports suggest the strategy has been successful.

Several students emphasized orientation as the way to provide students with early information. The following comment was typical:

> I would suggest a type of orientation at the community college where they explain the financial resources available and courses a student should take to prepare for the university. The university was much more difficult than the community college for me and I was not adequately prepared for the transition.

There were many comments concerned with academic procedures, course availability and course rigor. One student suggested better assistance with the selection of classes, noting:

> I was allowed to register for advanced classes regardless of course prerequisites.

And reflecting the comments of a dean we quoted ealier in this report, one student observed:

> Core courses should be taken at the university. Community colleges don't have the perspective of the continuity of core classes.

Suporting the perspective that community college classes are less demanding than those in universities, several students recommended that work in community colleges should be more difficult. One student wrote:

> Community colleges should better prepare their students for longer and more complex reading assignments. The exams should be more difficult and they should be structured for testing a student's knowledge of the material instead of simply memorization and recall.

In a different university, the same theme was struck with an emphasis on math.

> Course work, especially in the field of mathematics, should be more demanding. Too many teachers compromise the standards on tests. At the university the tests are harder... The community college atmosphere lends itself to that of a high school. Standards should be raised to prepare the student for the challenge yet to come.

A black student attending an inner city college was terse in her comment:

> More emphasis on reading, writing and mathematics skills at the community college level.

Several students also emphasized the need for more science and mathematics courses.

Advice to Universities

A predominant theme in student comments focusing on the university had to do with courtesy and university attitudes. In one very large university that had more than its share of this type of comment, one student wrote:

> Improve the attitude of employees and change the attitude of instructors. ...university caters to the young student who is supported by their parents and lives on campus. The constant comment I hear is: 'Come back tomorrow.' It is a 30 mile drive for me. The transfer from the small town atmosphere of a community college to this metropolis is horrifying. The cold atmosphere and feeling as though one is no more than a number (and any assistance is troublesome), is disheartening even to the most determined. If there were an alternative route to fulfilling my educational need, I would approach it without delay.

In the same university, another student wrote:

> Courtesy and helpfulness in the admissions office would ease the pressure of getting through the mountain of red tape.

In a different university, a student commented both on staff attitudes and difficult procedures.

> The university I attend needs to develop a better system for registering and changing classes. It does not begin to compare with one at the community college. The counselors and teachers need to be <u>much</u> friendlier to all students.

And in a third university, an obviously capable student was distressed by the attitudes she encountered:

> Efforts should be made to aid older transfer and returning students in entering honors program. I was made to feel unwelcome when applying to enter the honors program despite having made "A"s in two semesters of honors English at community college and transferring with a GPA of 3.91.

Universities could do a better job of dealing with the needs of older students. An articulate returning adult offered the following observation:

> I think most university officials will agree that a great number of working adults are returning to school. Yet, most universities still gear the majority of their undergraduate degree programs to the full-time student. I would like to see more undergraduate degree programs offered in the evening college or a more wide-spread use of the weekend college concept.

A student attending a university in a different city agreed,

> I would suggest that universities offer more academic courses during the night so students can work during the day and study at night without any academic problems or conflicts.

Security was also a concern for adults attending urban universities at night.

> The parking garages are isolated, especially at night. There has been much talk of muggings and rape in these areas. Although security guards are available, I am concerned about the walk from my car to class. Also, the secluded areas of the library present a threat. ...university is located in the inner city, which is more easily accessible to 'disturbed' people.

In addition to concerns about uncaring attitudes of employees and lack of attention to a rapidly growing adult clientele, many respondents wanted improved university services to ease the transition process. The same student who commented on security problems noted:

> Transfer students need orientation and tours of the facility as much as freshmen. The buildings could be better marked. Also, more maps and arrows would be helpful. This university is very spread out and interwoven with businesses, office buildings and shops, which are not a part of the university.

Several students emphasized the need for university representatives to visit community college campuses. Such comments typically came from inner city colleges where, as we have noted elsewhere, universities were the least likely to visit. One former inner city college student wrote:

> I strongly suggest that universities show a stronger representation on community college campuses.

A minority student in a different city was much more explicit.

> To improve transfer opportunities, I would suggest that representatives from universities identify early in the transfer students career what courses will be accepted at the university. University representatives should hold orientation every enrollment (registration) period (at community colleges) for advising the prospective students what courses they will accept for certain major areas of study.

This same student was not prepared to place all the burden on the university. She added:

> Transfer students should visit universities to obtain catalogs and talk to counselors before starting or completing courses at the community college level.

Other comments about procedures reflected many of the concerns previously identified in the chapter on university practices. One student argued:

> There should be some way of visiting a class in a university to see and know what to expect from a university before you enter.

Another noted:

> The university should give the student a chance to pre-register for classes. Residual and late registration is very hectic and can turn a student off to college immediately.

One student pin-pointed the problem with transcript evaluation.

> I wish they would evaluate the transfers faster. I had to take courses over because I didn't know if they would transfer. I lost a lot of hours and this set me back a semester.

While students offered extensive advice for changes that would make the university more responsive to their needs, their advice was sometimes tinged with a note of skepticism as in the case of one student who wrote:

> Universities should try to tailor programs toward the transfer students to use more of a student's previous work to the student's benefit rather than for the financial benefit of the university -- I guess I'm dreaming!

In essence, universities received many suggestions for improvement but few accolades for current practice. Advice to the university contrasted sharply with advice to the community college which was heavily interspersed with positive comments and a sense of appreciation. Students perceived many of the same problems with the university response to transfer students as was reported by administrators in universities and administrators and faculty in community colleges. Given these statements, perhaps we should be most surprised that the transfer process works so well for so many, not that it causes problems for some.

The comparison of the data yielded by the survey with the information provided through interviews and document analysis, suggests close agreement about the issues. The comments of students generally conform to those of knowledgeable actors within the institutions and at the state coordinating board level. Given what appears to be a reasonable level of consensus about the way the system works and the impact that it has on students, what can be done to improve the opportunities of urban students in general and minority students in particular to achieve the baccalaureate degree? Our answers to this question are provided in the final chapter.

CHAPTER 9

IMPROVING BACCALAUREATE OPPORTUNITIES IN URBAN SETTINGS

This report began by posing a series of policy issues related to the actions of state coordinating boards, public universities, and community colleges in assisting or impeding progress to the baccalaureate degree for students who begin their postsecondary experience in a community college. Urban community colleges and universities have an important opportunity to reduce discrepancies in degree achievement based on race because they serve such a high proportion of all minority students enrolled in most state systems. Beyond contributing to improved equity, urban colleges and universities may gain valuable insights into the practices most higher education institutions need to follow during the next decade as ever higher proportions of their students exhibit the characteristics of students now found primarily in urban settings.

In designing this study we made the assumption that the best way to improve baccalaureate opportunities for minority students was to improve the quality of practices designed to assist them in moving from community colleges where they were concentrated to universities which by virtue of cost and location appeared the most likely candidates to help them complete a four-year degree. As we conclude this report we are no longer certain that articulation policies should be the centerpiece of a strategy to reduce discrepancies in degree achievement between minorities and non-minorities.

This does not imply that we found an absence of barriers to effective transfer or that the process cannot be improved in important ways. Clearly, state coordinating boards working with two and four-year institutions can (and in our judgment should) improve opportunities for urban students to earn bachelor's degrees. In the recommendations which form the body of this chapter, we describe some of the practices that would contribute to this end. It is not clear, however, that the changes we suggest will benefit Hispanics and blacks disproportionately and thus contribute to reducing the overall discrepancies between their rates of degree achievement and the rates of the remainder of the population (native Americans excluded).

Beyond improving articulation practices, colleges and universities will have to examine internal priorities for programs and services in relation to the special circumstances and needs of urban blacks and Hispanics before improved degree achievement for these groups can become a reasonable expectation. Community colleges must find ways to support their participation in baccalaureate oriented education as well as in the more practical career related offerings. Universities must convince them that Hispanics and blacks can achieve in university settings by providing more role models in key faculty and administrative positions. In the recommendations which follow, we have tried to identify internal practices that could ben%fit from reform as well as ways of removing barriers to the smooth transition between two and four-year programs.

The preceding chapters have outlined current policies and practices in largely descriptive terms. We have suggested that universities and community

colleges constitute conflicting cultures which must be negotiated by students who by virtue of their own backgrounds are at home in neither. While many of the causes of student attrition can be attributed to variables over which institutions have little if any control, the difference in cultures can be mediated and interpreted for students. In addition there are practices of demonstrated efficacy in improving student persistence. In brief, we believe that institutions can in the short run reduce discrepancies between the degree achievement of minorities and non-minorities by paying attention to the variables they do influence in systematic ways.

The term "systems" is key. The conceptual framework for this study was a modification of Easton's (1965) systems model. We treated coordinating boards and pairs of institutions in eight cities as systems for delivering baccalaureate opportunities to urban minorities. State coordinating boards and the political systems for which they serve as proxies influence urban colleges and universities through the "demands" they make in terms of policy constraints and incentives, and through the "supports" they provide in the form of funding practices and budget allocations.

States vary in the authority they provide to coordinating boards. Coordinating boards vary in their interpretation of the authority they do have, in the methods they use to interact with the institutions they coordinate and in the personalities and professional experience of those who head them. By treating each state as a separate case, we were able to compare and contrast state influences and institutional responses.

Earlier chapters of this report focused on identifying "outputs", the decisions and actions taken by faculty and administrators in responding to the influences they attend. Our purpose was to produce an accurate description of the variables institutions control that influence degree achievement by their students. An accurate description of a system empowers its participants by making them more aware of probable cause and effect relationships. It is analygous to providing people who are intimately aware of trees with a map of the forest. It does not tell them where they should go but rather presents alternatives and outlines the probable consequences of following a particular route.

But what if the map is wrong in serious ways? Suppose it shows the world as flat or gives erroneous information about the location of demons. These are serious issues for studies that make predominant use of qualitative methodologies. To guard against the hazards of researcher bias, we used a design that included representatives from each participating institution as an integral member of the research team. Following completion of the rough draft of this report, site representatives were asked to judge accuracy and relevance from their perspective. The decision to guarantee institutional anonymity left us free to deal with issues of accuracy rather than institutional image. There were surprisingly few areas where adjustments were required. So we believe the report provides an accurate portrayal of conditions as they were at the time the study was conducted.

Policy analysis does not end with the accurate descriptions of outputs. It seeks also to identify "outcomes", Easton's "ever-widening and vanishing pattern of concentric ripples." The outcomes of interest to this study were the ways in which students experienced an educational system and the

consequences for their persistence to the baccalaureate degree. Also of interest were interventions available to state coordinating boards and institutional leaders for improving minority achievement of bachelor's degrees. In the remainder of this chapter we present the range of interventions suggested by the data organized according to the system segment where they most closely apply.

All of the interventions can be found in some form among one or more of the participating states. In most instances, however, they are not employed in systematic ways leading to their attenuation by conflicting practices. For this reason, we argue explicitly for an approach that combines as many of the interventions as feasible across institutions within a specific state. Their employment on a discrete basis is unlikely to accomplish the magnitude of change necessary to achieve significant impact on current achievement rates.

State Coordinating Boards

The role of coordinating boards varies along a continuum from bureaucratic and reactive to issue oriented and proactive. Some differences can be attributed to the powers assigned jy state legislation. Others appear to devolve from planning capabilities and the preferences of position incumbents. But all have in common the responsibility for maintaining system integrity and the need to balance institutional interests against the priorities and concerns of those the system was designed to serve.

Improving opportunities for minority students to earn bachelor's degrees from a state coordinating board perspective involves encouraging institutions to give greater attention to their responsibilities as part of a system, a proposition against which most find it difficult to argue. In fact the extent to which improved articulation equates with apple pie and motherhood is also a major liability. Because no one wants to be characterized as opposed to policies which obviously serve the public interest, they favor instead quality, academic freedom and institutional integrity. Regrettably, there is a very thin line between the appropriate use of these concepts in defense of the academic enterprise and their inappropriate use as substitutes for public-be-damned institutional interests.

The recommendations which follow have been culled from an analysis of the outcomes reported by states that have implemented one or more of them without apparent adverse effects on quality or integrity of the institutions to which they have been applied.

Recommendation 1: State coordinating boards should establish clear expectations that publicly funded two and four-year institutions will, as a priority, work closely together to provide opportunities for trouble-free transfer. This objective can be promoted through defining institutional missions in ways that limit competition and establishing explicit responsibilities for cooperation. Admission standards and responsibilities for remediation represent areas that should receive special attention in revised mission statements.

Recommendation 2: State coordinating boards should work to achieve common academic calendars among all publicly funded institutions in their respective states. The decision by any institution to follow a quarter system as distinct from a semester system is a matter of historical accident rather than compelling logic. Once established and sanctified by information systems and course outlines, however, the decision takes on a life of its own. It is neither easy nor inexpensive to convert from one system to the other. Nevertheless, differences in academic calendars represent an important source of difficulty for transfer students and one of the least difficult to remedy from the state perspective, provided that institutions involved in the conversion receive appropriate consideration in their budgets.

Recommendation 3: The associate degree in arts or science should be defined as the preferred credential for transfer. Students earning one of these degrees in an approved major should be guaranteed junior status at any public university in the state subject only to space limitations. This approach seems far more conducive to trouble-free transfer than articulation on a course by course basis or by designing core areas for majors. States should give serious consideration to adopting this recommendation in conjunction with some form of competency exam administered to all students seeking status as upper division undergraduates.

There may be some majors, architecture and fine arts for example, where lower division work at a community college may work to the disadvantage of a student. Such majors should be clearly identified in the transfer literature of both two and four-year colleges. Further, the burden of proof for excluding any major from the intent of this recommendation should be placed on the university requesting the exemption. Community colleges should be required to redefine their transfer associate degrees as subsequently noted to ensure that students are no longer required to choose between meeting the requirements for a community college degree and fulfilling the lower division program of studies specified for a baccalaureate major.

Recommendation 4: Each state should consider establishing an articulation coordinating committee. Membership would include representatives from public and private two and four-year colleges and from the state coordinating board. Depending on the scope of committee responsibility, it may also prove valuable to include representatives from the K-12 sector. As a minimum committee responsibilities should include:

a) oversight of the transfer process to include responsibility for defining articulation issues and advancing recommendations for their resolution to institutional governing boards and to the state coordinating board.

b) monitoring the continuity of academic programs and related institutional practices designed to facilitate transfer.

c) serving as an appeal board for students whose concerns about the award of transfer credit or other aspects of the transfer process are not satisfied through the normal institutional grievance procedures.

In carrying out its responsibilities, the articulation coordinating committee should have the right to appoint working subcommittees comprised of

appropriate institutional representatives and to obtain access to institutional data necessary to the conduct of business.

Recommendation 5: State coordinating boards should create a common framework for numbering and titling courses intended to meet lower division requirements for a baccalaureate degree. The framework, while stopping short of the common course numbering system employed in one of the study states could set forth the following expectations:

a) The same band of numbers would be used by all public institutions in identifying freshman and sophomore courses designed to be applied to the bachelor's degree.

b) Only those courses clearly acceptable for baccalaureate credit by the state's public four-year institutions would be assigned to the specified band of numbers by community colleges.

c) Within the bounds of normal creativity, course titles and course descriptions should be as similar as possible across institutions.

d) Differences in the number of credit hours awarded for courses designed to accomplish the same objectives for students of comparable preparation would be eliminated.

Recommendation 6: Pubic universities and community colleges should be encouraged to share information necessary for efficient operation of the transfer process and for monitoring the effectiveness of student preparation. As a minimum, the following guidelines should be enacted:

a) Student specific data providing information on the performance of transfers should be provided to community colleges by their major receiving universities on at least an annual basis. Data should be disaggregated by race and number of hours completed before transfer.

b) Where the volume of student transfer is large, institutions should be encouraged to explore the electronic exchange of transcript information.

c) Catalog requirements in effect the year a student matriculates as a freshman should be applied to community college transfers in the same manner as native students.

d) Universities should be encouraged to maintain a student advisement manual or brochure for each group of related majors receiving a significant number of transfer students.

Recommendation 7: The policies governing the administration of student financial aid programs should provide the same continuity of coverage for transfer students as for those who begin in universities. In particular, attention should be given to the information and transition problems experienced by students whose eligibility for state financial aid changes significantly as a result of moving from a lower cost two-year college to a more expensive public or private four-year institution.

Recommendation 8: States should consider providing special incentives for the joint use of facilities by community colleges and the universities to which most of their students transfer. For example, community colleges might offer remedial courses to the more marginally prepared university students on the campus of the university. Universities might offer selected junior level courses on a community college campus to provide a transition experience.

Community Colleges

Urban community colleges remain the most important and sometimes only link between large numbers of minority students and upward socioeconomic mobility in a society where being uneducated and being unemployed seems ever more closely linked. Under such circumstances it is not difficult to understand why so much emphasis has been placed on making students employable. Even though half of the students who attend urban community colleges have the baccalaureate degree as a primary objective, this objective appears realistic for no more than a third of those who have this objective.

From fragmentary data and the estimates of those who work most closely with students attending inner city colleges, those who are probable baccalaureate candidates will reach that objective only after overcoming odds that to many middle class educators would appear insurmountable. So it is difficult to fault administrators who have concluded from a social engineering perspective that the most important, if not exclusive role of the urban community college, should be to teach vocational-technical skills.

This conclusion would be more defensible if urban community college districts exhibited racial balance as one of their distinctive characteristics. Unfortunately, many do not. So a decision to emphasize vocational-technical skills at inner city colleges, however justifiable from the perspective of student preparation and efficient use of educational resources, is also a decision to deny some percentage of inner city residents, mostly minority, of any opportunity to escape the circumstances to which they have fallen heir as a condition of birth. This fact accounts for the absence of minority administrators and faculty members among the ranks of those who doubt the value of continuing a credible baccalaureate effort in inner city colleges.

Urban community college districts must preserve access for their disadvantaged populations. They cannot function in the midst of serious and debilitating social problems without doing what they can to alleviate the human misery they daily encounter. They must do all they can to help people get the jobs necessary to self respect and family integrity. And they cannot close the baccalaureate door to those who by escaping from poverty demonstrate to an increasingly disbelieving cohort that the system can work. And all of these complex tasks must be completed with increasing levels of quality amidst enrollment losses that threaten the base of financial support and a set of national priorities that does not appear to value the effort.

It is small wonder that state coordinating board officials were reluctant to criticize the outcomes achieved by inner city colleges speaking instead of

"value added" with somewhat the same awe reserved for the efforts of Mother Teresa. Given these conditions, it requires no little temerity to advance a series of recommendations for improvement. But the task is made easier by the lack of agreement among those who lead inner city institutions about what their priorities should encompass.

At the extreme, faculty and administrators in one study college felt the transfer function to be of minor importance because of the need to prepare students for immediate employment. In a similar vein, faculty advisors at a different college counseled bona fide transfer students to leave as soon as possible because they did not believe it was in the student's interests to remain any longer than necessary at the community college.

At the other end of the continuum an urban college described the academic transfer function as the cornerstone of its mission. As a result, admissions and academic placement procedures reflected a concern with program planning, support services, ongoing monitoring of progress and carefully structured learning experiences all designed to encourage as many students as possible to aspire to the baccalaureate without limiting opportunities to prepare for employment for those who chose that alternative.

In brief we do not think it is an either/or proposition. Inner city colleges frequently are situated in areas of high unemployment. Their students are among the least mobile in our society. Providing entry level employment skills as well as opportunities for upgrading for those who already have jobs will remain an important responsibility, but ways must be found to provide access to the baccalaureate as well. The following recommendations, attainable for most inner city colleges within current budget constraints, should help to preserve some reasonable balance for their students between demands of the present and dreams of the future.

Recommendation 9: Community colleges should work to achieve a high degree of continuity between their transfer programs and related programs in four year institutions to which their students most commonly transfer. Among the actions that would contribute the most to the attainment of this objective:

a) maintaining a full range of transfer courses scheduled according to some preannounced and guaranteed timetable. While it might not be economically feasible to offer every course every semester, both evening and day, it should be possible for students to complete lower division requirements on the campus of primary attendance without unreasonable delays.

b) offering transfer courses for the same number of credit hours as major receiving institutions and making certain content is parallel.

c) awarding associate degrees in applied arts or sciences for the completion of any approved lower division sequence of a four-year college or university to which its students regularly transfer without the necessity of taking courses unique to the community college.

d) offering incentives for students to graduate with associate degrees where programs have been fully articulated.

Recommendation 10: Balance the emphasis on access and responsiveness to the community with an equal emphasis on effectiveness and quality control. Quality and access are not mutually exclusive, but quality does require a reasonable relationship between available resources and breadth of activity. Actions needed to reassure four-year institutions and the general public about the community college concern for quality include:

a) establishing entrance requirements for all transfer offerings based upon the demands they should make for reading, writing, math skills and previous educational background to be comparable to the baccalaureate offerings of major receiving institutions.

b) assessing all entering students interested in enrolling in any transfer offering to ensure they possess the requisite skills.

c) requiring mandatory placement in remedial courses for any student whose assessment reveals deficiencies.

d) permitting students who are placed initially in remedial courses to exit to transfer offerings only after demonstrating on a post assessment that they have remedied the deficiencies that led to their initial placement.

e) strengthening course rigor by placing greater emphasis on reading for comprehension and writing to synthesize as contrasted with reading for recognition and multiple choice examinations to test recognition.

f) revising grading practices in university parallel courses to make them more comparable to those the students will experience after transferring.

g) reassessing the rationale for offering the associate degree in general education. If the reassessment leads to conclusions that the degree remains primarily an award for attendance, a mechanism for keeping students without educational plans eligible for financial aid, or a public relations device to provide the appearance of program completion; the degree should be replaced by some alternative less confusing to students and the general public.

h) offering stronger liberal arts programs along with opportunities for honors work to enhance the image of the community college as a place where serious students can find a challenge.

Recommendation 11: Community colleges should increase the emphasis on program continuity and achievement without relinquishing the caring attitudes that have been their hallmark. Students who are the first in their families to attempt higher education require special support and understanding if the opportunity extended to them is to be meaningful. But the special support should be provided in an environment that stresses achievement rather than makes exceptions or excuses. Practices that contribute to this objective are the following:

a) balancing the use of technology to individualize instruction with such human interventions as tutoring to ensure students develop emotionally and socially while mastering new competencies.

b) continuing the excellent progress already made in employing minority administrators and faculty members.

c) establishing realistic standards of progress and helping students achieve those standards through carefully structured monitoring procedures. Students who do not meet established standards after reasonable trial periods should be counseled out promptly to conserve institutional resources for those who do make progress.

d) emphasizing motivational activities in the context of programs designed to promote social, cultural and physical development. Colleges serving the urban poor in particular should not relinquish the time honored goal of producing broadly educated men and women in favor of producing technicians.

e) helping students develop the coping skills required to negotiate the less concerned environment of the receiving university.

f) employing as many full-time faculty as resources will permit and providing them with released time for activities considered essential to students informational needs or overall development.

Recommendation 12: Community colleges should provide students with comprehensive and reliable information as early as possible in their college careers. Students who have few reliable alternative sources of information about college require help in assessing their strengths and weaknesses as these apply to the costs and benefits of attaining a college degree. Most of all they need assistance in developing realistic educational plans that neither overlook their deficiencies nor accept them too readily as disqualifying. Throughout this study no intervention emerges as more important than improved information provided in a timely fashion. Actions that would improve the flow of information to students attending urban community colleges encompass:

a) identifying potential transfer students as early as possible and providing them with accurate information about baccalaureate opportunities and requirements.

b) entering into consortium arrangements with major receiving institutions to maintain eligibility for financial aid for students completing transition between the two institutions.

c) improving faculty advising and counseling to help students accomplish trouble free transfer without loss of course credits. Emphasis on maintaining current informtion among counseling staffs appears particularly essential.

d) strengthening orientation programs as a means for coordinating assessment, advising and information dissemination.

Urban Universities

The Carnegie Commission in 1972 recommended that community colleges should have major responsibility for increasing access to higher education with comprehensive colleges taking the lead in expanding access to upper division work. This is the scenario that seems to have taken place given the persistence rates of the relatively limited number of minority students admitted to research universities under the differentially qualified category. In the urban areas we studied there are reasons to be concerned about the degree of equity that has resulted.

Clearly, comprehensive universities were more concerned about their teaching responsibilities and the social milieu in which they functioned than were their research university counterparts. They also served higher proportions of minority students, employed more minority administrators and faculty members, reported more concern about under prepared students and more programs to assist them, and, with one noteworthy exception, worked more closely with community colleges serving high proportions of minority students.

But comprehensive universities were not available in several cities and in others were much less conveniently located than the research university. Further, they did not offer the same range of programs with many of the most desired majors located exclusively in the research institutions. Finally, in two instances where there were both comprehensive universities and research universities in or adjacent to the same city, the comprehensive institution enrolled a heavily minority student population and had a reputation for less rigor and lower quality than the research institution.

Comprehensive universities, including those that enroll predominantly minority student bodies, make important contributions to the achievement of national and state access and equity goals. Still it is difficult to visualize significant improvement to the current maldistribution of educational opportunities from a system that largely relieves urban research universities of their responsibility for reducing discrepancies between the achievement of minority and non-minority students, particularly in urban areas where attending a comprehensive university means changing place of residence.

Even where research universities accept their responsibility for improving degree opportunities for minorities, as most do, there remain serious problems of fitting deeds to commitment. Many of these problems result from forces outside internal university decision processes.

With three exceptions, the universities in this study were relatively junior members of multi-campus systems. The political pressures of reconciling conflicting interests under conditions of fiscal constraint caused the adoption of explicit or implicit system level policies that precluded shifting resources from the more mature to the newer institutions. In some systems, the policies preventing the shift of resources between institutions coexisted with a strategic planning emphasis that encouraged shifts of resources from less central to more central programs within institutions.

Regardless of logic, the outcomes of such policies produced fewer programs and less in the way of services than the urban universities themselves would have preferred. In addition, the building of residence halls was particularly discouraged, at least in part, because of the perceived impact on other institutions in the system.

While the contraints of system's politics clearly inhibited the role of research university in responding to the needs of urban minorities, institutional practices were also an important factor. Despite their reliance on transfer students, most made few provisions for effective transition preferring instead to concentrate available resources on the declining number of high school graduates.

Most of the universities in this study had good information systems. But, institutional studies of transfer students were rarely disaggregated by race. And studies whether conducted at department, college or university levels were not widely circulated beyond the initiating office. As one result, most of the information available on transfer students was of the anecdotal or hearsay variety. In some universities astonishing misconceptions of the preparation and performance of transfer students coexisted comfortably with sophisticated outcome information showing the exact opposite.

Most of the research universities also had special academic support services designed to serve underprepared and minority students. Such programs were largely funded from external sources. Those who staffed them had little confidence they would survive a serious cut in outside funding. Of greater concern than any of these factors, however, was the limited understanding of the issue among most faculty members and an equally limited concern for learning more. When condescending or inhospitable faculty attitudes were combined with a reluctance on the part of administrators to work with their community college counterparts, worst case scenarios produced abundant evidence of unncessary barriers in the paths of baccalaureate oriented minorities.

The recommendations which follow are addressed to the internal decision makers in urban universities. For optimum results, however, changes in internal priorities and procedures must be accomplished by supporting decisions at the governing board and coordinating board levels.

Recommendation 13: Urban universities should strengthen working relationships with community colleges enrolling significant numbers of minority students. Actions that would contribute to the achievement of this objective include:

a) regular articulation meetings between administrators in related service areas including financial aid, records, counseling and admissions.

b) systematic feedback on the performance, persistence and graduation rates of transfer students disaggregated by race.

c) early notice of impending catalog changes.

Recommendation 14: There is need to improve the continuity experienced by students when moving from a community college to an adjacent university. Steps that would enhance continuity include:

a) coordinating academic calendars and credits in comparable courses.

b) catalog guarantees to community college transfers who began their study during the same time period as native students to whom the guarantees apply.

c) incentives to encourage university faculty members to become better acquainted with the problems faced by inner city community colleges and public school systems.

d) providing community college faculty members with an opportunity to improve their understanding of the content and methodologies of upper division courses for which their community college courses serve as prerequisites.

e) offering special opportunities for community college counselors to become better informed about university requirements and procedures.

Recommendation 15: Barrier-free transition from adjacent community colleges should be established by universities as a planning priority. The following areas in particular should receive consideration:

a) targeting a reasonable part of the total admissions effort on community colleges enrolling high proportions of minority students.

b) visits by representatives of major receiving programs to related community college classes to improve the quality of information available to prospective transfer students.

c) developing an office responsible for transfer student program planning to provide advising before and after transfer.

d) strengthened orientation programs for transfer students as a required part of the registration process along with reasonable priority in course selection.

Recommendation 16: Universities should work to improve the environment for minority student achievement. Actions that have potential for moderating students perceptions of a hostile or racist environment include:

a) sensitizing faculty and administrators to the problems confronting minority students by continuing to emphasize the importance of employing qualified minority faculty members and administrators.

b) integrating special support services for minority students and those who staff them into the mainstream of university activity.

c) publicizing the university commitment to minority student achievement through targeted financial assistance and guarantees of continuing

support for categorically funded support programs of demonstrated effectiveness.

d) conducting and publicizing needs assessments in such areas as residence halls, child care, parking and security. Needs that emerge should receive a reasonable priority in university resource allocation procedures.

Recommendation 17: The educational practices of universities should communicate clearly their expectations for community college transfer students and should provide support and assistance to community colleges and their students in meeting such expectations. Practices that would contribute to these objectives include:

a) offering junior level transition classes taught by university faculty members on community college campuses.

b) defining competencies expected of upper division students and working cooperatively with community college staff to identify and implement appropriate assessment procedures.

c) redesigning the transcript evaluation process so that transfer students are provided with a single estimate of the credits the university will recognize in relation to a stated program choice.

d) encouraging students who choose or who are required to attend a community college as their point of entry to higher education to earn an associate in arts or sciences degree before transferring.

e) accepting community college students who do not initially meet university admission standards only after they have completed with satisfactory grades a prescribed sequence of not fewer than 24 semester hours including courses in composition, math and the sciences.

Recommendation 18: Universities need to adapt current practices designed around the needs of full-time day students to respond to the concerns of the growing number of part-time, working adults who are reaching upper division status after studying for the equivalent of two years at a community college. Among those responding to the survey reported in Chapter 8, black students in particular tended to be older and disproportionately to have family responsibilities. If universities are to escape some of the problems of loss of program coherence and continuity experienced by community colleges in responding to the same phenomenon earlier and yet still provide services to the rising tide of part-time transfers seeking a bachelor's degree, planning for evening services and program offerings must receive high priority.

A Final Word

The recommendations included in this chapter are based on a faith in state systems of postsecondary education as they currently function to provide opportunties for urban dwellers in general and for minority citizens in

particular. We recognize an alternative view that calls for radical reform of the system as a prerequisite to any significant changes in outcomes. But we found little in our study to support this view.

A range of practices occurs across states and among differing institutions Clearly, some practices work better than others. Leadership ranges from active and concerned to passive and almost indifferent. But all of the systems work for as many as half of those who currently access them and with the systematic implementation of the recommendations identified above could be made to work for as many as half of the remaining potential clinetele.

No system works perfectly and there are many variables that influence discrepancies in degree achievement between minorities and non-minorities over which higher education institutions have little influence. Whether or not the reader agrees with our estimate of the potential impact of the changes we have identified, it is apparent that the outcomes currently being achieved can be improved by purposeful institutional interventions, most of which require few resources beyond those already being employed.

The changes recommended do not require that universities give up their aspirations for major research status. Nor is it necessary or even desirable for community colleges to give up their strong philosophical commitment to access and comprehensiveness. There is the need for a greater willingness among all publicly supported colleges and universities to see themselves more as servants in pursuit of common goals than as competitors pursuing institutional enhancement. Or to put it in the words of those who cooperated in this study because of their concern for improving the life opportunities of all citizens: "if we could just develop a sense of collegiality between university and community college staffs, 95 percent of all the problems we experience would disappear."

There was evidence of such a developing spirit of collegiality in several of the participating cities. But a spirit of collegiality, however desirable, is extremely vulnerable to changes in personnel and priorities. So it falls to state coordinating boards to provide both the expectation of cooperation as well as incentives for its realization. Several states provided examples of ways to accomplish this goal without heavy-handed intervention in areas more appropriately the responsibility of internal institutional leadership.

City governments understand the importance of public education as a deterrent to urban decay and a primary ingredient for renewal. They have reason to expect that publicly funded institutions will work together to extend the advantages of higher education to all capable of benefiting. Institutional leaders are genuinely concerned about educational opportunities for minorities and committed to contributing to their improvement within the scope of competing mission demands. State coordinating board officials understand the need for state level initiatives and incentives. Given the extent of awareness about the need to reduce the discrepancies in degree achievement attributable to race, the time seems right to test the assumption that state systems of higher education developed over the last twenty years are equal to the challenge of providing equitable educational opportunities to all citizens of an integrated society.

This volume will have served its purpose to the extent that it has defined the problem with clarity, established the range of interventions that have already been found useful in at least one state or institutional setting, encouraged the systematic rather than discrete application of interventions and conveyed the message that concerned faculty members and administrators can make an important difference in addressing the problem of minority degree achievement in the short run through their influence on the variables they control.

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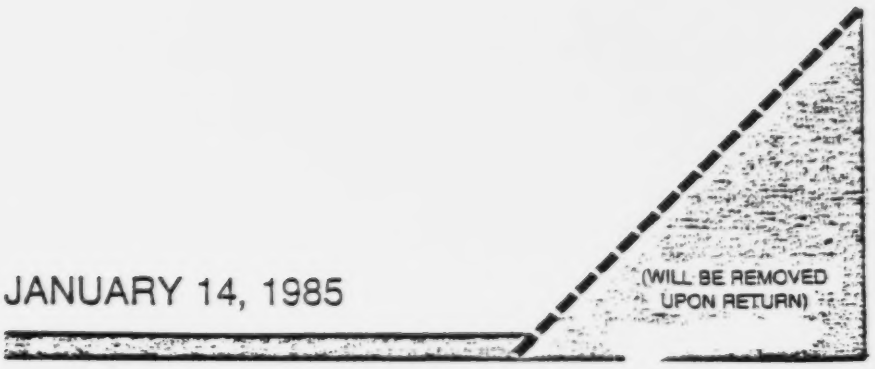
Appendix A

FORD TRANSFER PROJECT
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

TRANSFERRING FROM COMMUNITY COLLEGE TO UNIVERSITY

A SURVEY TO IMPROVE
OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

JANUARY 14, 1985



1. Please list the community college where you earned *most* of your credits before transferring, the number of terms attended and the credit hours earned:

COLLEGE NAME _____

TERMS ATTENDED _____ CREDIT HOURS EARNED _____

2. How many of the credit hours earned at the community college identified above:

WERE ACCEPTED BY YOUR UNIVERSITY? _____

WILL COUNT TOWARD THE BACHELOR'S DEGREE? _____

3. What was your average grade in the community college identified above? (Mark one)

A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐

4. Compared to the grades I earned at community college, my university grades are: (Mark one)

HIGHER ☐ THE SAME ☐ LOWER ☐ NO TERM COMPLETED ☐

5. When did you first decide to transfer to a university? (Mark one)

BEFORE STARTING CLASSES AT THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE ☐

DURING ATTENDANCE AT THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE ☐

AFTER LEAVING THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

6. How important was each of the following in your decision to attend this university? (Mark one answer for each)

	VERY IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	NOT IMPORTANT
ADVICE OF A COMMUNITY COLLEGE TEACHER			
ADVICE OF A COMMUNITY COLLEGE COUNSELOR			
ADVICE OF A FRIEND OR RELATIVE			
NUMBER OF CREDIT HOURS ACCEPTED			
IT IS CLOSE TO WHERE I LIVE			
UNIVERSITY HAS GOOD ACADEMIC REPUTATION			
THE PROGRAM I WANTED WAS AVAILABLE			
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE WAS OFFERED			
INFORMATION FROM UNIVERSITY REPRESENTATIVE			
RECRUITED BY ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT			
REPUTATION OF THE UNIVERSITY FOR SOCIAL ACTIVITIES			
LOW TUITION			
FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES OR A JOB MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO GO AWAY TO SCHOOL			
THIS UNIVERSITY'S GRADUATES GET GOOD JOBS			
THIS UNIVERSITY'S GRADUATES GET ADMITTED TO GOOD GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS			

7. Below are listed some of the sources of information and assistance for students who transfer. How useful were each of these sources for you? (Mark one answer for each source)

Community College Sources	VERY USEFUL	SOMEWHAT USEFUL	NOT USEFUL	NOT USED
COUNSELING OFFICE				
TEACHERS				
ORIENTATION SESSIONS				
REGISTRAR'S OFFICE				
FINANCIAL AID OFFICE				
HONORS PROGRAM				
TRANSFER GUIDES				
COLLEGE CATALOG				
SPECIAL PROGRAMS FOR TRANSFERS				
FRIENDS WHO HAVE TRANSFERRED				
UNIVERSITY SOURCES				
ADMISSIONS OFFICE				
TEACHERS				
ORIENTATION SESSIONS				
UNIVERSITY REPRESENTATIVES				
ATHLETIC REPRESENTATIVES				
VISIT TO UNIVERSITY				
FINANCIAL AIDS OFFICE				
UNIVERSITY CATALOG				
OTHER UNIVERSITY PUBLICATIONS				
ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS				
SPECIAL PROGRAMS FOR TRANSFERS				
SPECIAL PROGRAMS				

8. Below are some requirements related to classroom performance. How well did your coursework *in the community college* prepare you for these requirements in university courses. (Mark one answer for each skill)

	VERY WELL	FAIRLY WELL	POORLY	NOT NEEDED IN UNIV. COURSES
WRITING ASSIGNMENTS (TERM PAPERS, REPORTS)				
COMPUTER USE				
READING ASSIGNMENTS (TEXTBOOK AND OTHER ASSIGNED WORK)				
EXAMINATIONS				
TAKING NOTES ON LECTURES				
CLASSROOM DISCUSSION				
LABORATORY ASSIGNMENTS				

9. How would you compare instructors, support services, and courses at the community college with those at the university in the following areas: (Mark one answer for each area)

	BETTER AT COMM. COLL.	ABOUT THE SAME	BETTER AT UNIV.	NO BASIS FOR COMP.
INSTRUCTORS				
KNOWLEDGE OF MATERIAL				
ORGANIZATION OF COURSES				
CAPABILITY TO TEACH/EXPLAIN COURSE MATERIAL				
OPENNESS TO STUDENT IDEAS				
AVAILABILITY TO MEET WITH STUDENTS				
HELPFULNESS WITH CAREER PLANS				
SUPPORT SERVICES/ACTIVITIES				
TUTORING				
COUNSELING SERVICES				
LIBRARY				
ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES				
NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION				
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE				
STUDENT CENTER/UNION				
CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES				
SOCIAL EVENTS				
COURSES				
OFFERED AT CONVENIENT HOURS				
AVAILABILITY OF REQUIRED COURSES				
EASE OF REGISTERING/ CHANGING COURSES				
RELEVANCE TO YOUR EDUCATIONAL/ EMPLOYMENT GOALS				
APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY				

10. How well did your elementary and secondary schools prepare you for university requirements in each of the following areas? (Mark one for each area)

	VERY WELL	FAIRLY WELL	POORLY
READING			
WRITING			
SPEAKING			
MATHEMATICS			
SCIENCE			
SOCIAL STUDIES			

11. In which of the following fields are you planning to earn your baccalaureate degree? (Mark one)

- ☐ ALLIED HEALTH
- ☐ ARTS OR HUMANITIES
- ☐ BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES
- ☐ BUSINESS OR ACCOUNTING
- ☐ COMPUTER SCIENCE
- ☐ EDUCATION OR HUMAN SERVICES
- ☐ ENGINEERING, ARCHITECTURE OR RELATED TECHNOLOGIES
- ☐ PHYSICAL SCIENCE
- ☐ MATHEMATICS
- ☐ SOCIAL SCIENCES

OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____

12. Did you select the courses you took in your community college to achieve the degree identified above?

YES ☐ NO ☐

13. If you answered "No" to question #12, what was the objective that guided selection of your community college courses?

_____

_____

14. What is the highest level of formal education obtained by your parents? (Mark one in each column)

	FATHER	MOTHER
GRAMMAR SCHOOL OR LESS		
SOME HIGH SCHOOL		
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE		
SOME COLLEGE CREDIT		
CERTIFICATE OR DIPLOMA		
ASSOCIATE DEGREE		
BACHELORS DEGREE		
SOME GRADUATE SCHOOL		
GRADUATE DEGREE		

15. On the average, how many hours per week do you work outside the home for pay while attending your university? _____

16. Indicate the number of credit hours you attempted *during your first term at your university.* _____

Of these, how many did you complete with a passing grade? _____

17. How are you currently classified by the university you attend? (Mark one)

FRESHMAN ☐ SOPHOMORE ☐ JUNIOR ☐ SENIOR ☐

18. How old will you be on December 31, 1985? (Mark one)

22 OR YOUNGER ☐ 23 - 35 ☐ 36 - 35 ☐ OVER 45 ☐

19. Indicate the degrees or certificates you have already earned and the year for each. (Mark those applicable)

Degrees or Certificates	EARNED	YEAR
PASSED GED TEST		
HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA		
ASSOCIATE DEGREE		
OTHER (PLEASE DESCRIBE)		

20. Do you have dependent children who live at home with you?

YES ☐ NO ☐ HOW MANY? _____

21. How important are each of the following financial resources in helping you meet the costs (tuition, fees, living expenses, transportation, books) of attending university? (Mark one answer for each possible source)

Financial Resources	VERY IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	NOT IMPORTANT	NOT AVAILABLE
WORK AND SAVINGS				
FINANCIAL AID (GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS)				
LOANS				
PARENTS OR SPOUSE				
VETERANS BENEFITS				
OTHER				

22. How do you identify your ethnic status? (Mark one)

☐ AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKAN ☐ BLACK/AFRO-AMERICAN ☐ CAUCASIAN
☐ ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER ☐ HISPANIC OTHER _____

23. Was English the language ordinarily spoken in your home when you were growing up? (Mark one)

YES ☐ NO ☐

24. Your sex (Mark one)

MALE ☐ FEMALE ☐

25. Finally, we would like to ask if you have any specific suggestions for ways of improving transfer opportunities for students such as yourself.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your participation in this project.

PLEASE RETURN IN ENVELOPE PROVIDED

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ERIC Clearinghouse for
Junior Colleges
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